HERITAGE OF CLARKS, NEBRASKA

Compiled and Edited by
Clarks Bicentennial Heritage Committee

1865-1976

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Preface

Clarks, Nebraska, is presently 111 years old. We have endeavored to compile, within the pages of this volume, an interesting record of its history and its people. Our research extended many miles outside the city limits and introduced us to former citizens and their descendants scattered across the country.

We view this Bicentennial manuscript as a small contribution to the preservation of our town. It is our hope that future generations of Clarks citizens will amend and add to this historical collection.

We wish to extend our gratitude to the many people who wrote and supported this book. Our sources of information and photographs numbered in the hundreds and consisted of many of the descendants of the pioneers whose story we tell. We dedicate this book to the preservation of those virtues our forefathers held most dear — love of God, our country and our neighbor.

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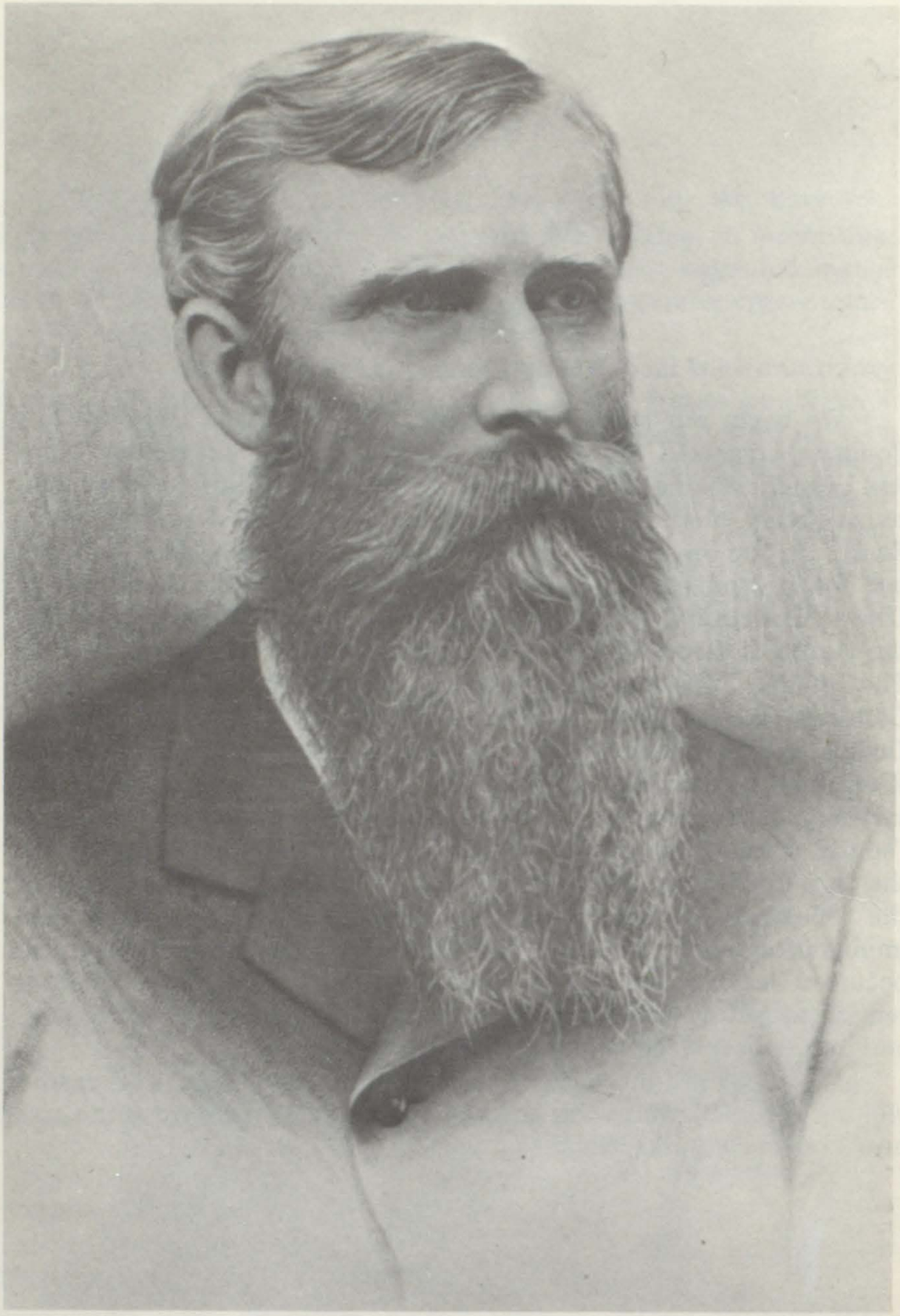
Introduction

We begin our story in the year 1854 when the United States Congress organized the Nebraska Territory. Four years later, a law was passed defining the boundaries of its counties and locating their county seats. Merrick County now had a name and a county seat — Elvira. To the present day no one knows the exact location of Elvira, but many pioneers believed it was located two miles southeast of Clarks. The county received its name from the wife of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Her maiden name was Elvira Merrick. The volume "History of Nebraska" tells us of the Western Stage Company during 1858. It was the carrier of the U.S. mail between Omaha and Fort Kearny. The stage road closely followed the Platte River and periodically parts of the road were washed away. The surveyor located the road by describing it as lying so many feet "south of the Hartwell barn." The Western Stage Company erected the first building in the county. Its work coupled with the advent of the telegraph brought communication to Merrick County and immigration soon increased. In 1864, a wide-spread Indian war occurred leaving the county almost without population. Records remain to tell us that farms were abandoned, equipment left to rust, and homes destroyed. Many settlers never returned.

We concern ourselves in this book, with those courageous women and men who persevered and returned to homestead the area now known as Clarks, Nebraska.



Silas H. H. Clark, 8th president of the Union Pacific Railroad. He began his career as a conductor on the construction train of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. From December 9, 1890 until February 1, 1893, he was general manager of the Union Pacific. He was vice president when he was chosen president and served in that position until February 1, 1898. The village of Clarks was named in his honor. (Photo credit used with permission, Union Pacific Railroad Museum Collection.)

Chapter 1

Founders of Clarksville

Calvin Blanchard Hartwell, circa 1860. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

Elizabeth Ragsdale Hartwell about 1900. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

CALVIN BLANCHARD HARTWELL AND ELIZABETH RAGSDALE HARTWELL

Hartwell geneological records tell us that Calvin Blanchard Hartwell was born near Lowell, Massachusetts, on January 5, 1810. He was an educated man, a graduate of Harvard University. In 1837, at Washington, Indiana, he married Elizabeth Ragsdale, and they moved to Hillsboro, Illinois. Four of their children were born there — Lucy A., Thomas J., Caroline S., and Mary Elizabeth. In 1849, they moved to Worth County, Missouri, and five more children were born. They were John C., Laura Jane, Hannah Rosine, Malina Alice (mother of Meta Key presently of Clarks) and Amos Edgar. One of Calvin Blanchard's sons wrote a biography of his father telling us that Calvin Blanchard operated a general store in Allenville, Missouri, in the early days of the Civil War. Missouri was a border state but Hartwell was in sympathy with the Union cause. He organized a company of soldiers (Union Army) but was not permitted to join because he was "a cripple." His oldest son was a soldier. Strong feelings led to violence, and because of his father's activities, the son became a target. Nine men with whom Calvin Blanchard was well

acquainted (and who were Rebels) signed an oath to shoot him on sight. The towns singing teacher, also a Union sympathizer, was shot down in ambush. After that incident Hartwell decided to leave Missouri. By that time their two eldest daughters were married. Lucy (Mrs. DuBois) and Caroline (Mrs. Poland) remained in Missouri. Hartwell's oldest son, T. J. was still in the Army.

The other six children accompanied their parents to Nebraska in 1862. Hartwell family sources relate that Calvin Blanchard originally wanted to go to Oregon, but the Indians were fearsome. It apparently seemed unwise to lead his family there at that time as his son was then only two years old. The family crossed the Missouri at Omaha on the ferry boat and settled on a ranch on the Elkhorn River, seven miles east of Elk City (Douglas County). They lived there three years and later moved west into Merrick County in 1865. At that time Calvin Blanchard was fifty-five years old. A line taken from the diary of Malina Alice Hartwell on January 21, 1880, reads "beans for breakfast, beans for dinner, beans for supper, beans, beans, beans."

According to a manuscript dated 1882: "A ranch building built of hewn logs with roof of shingles was built on Eagle Island by Bill Hufftalen. It had scarcely been built when it was purchased by the Western Stage Company. Bill went west seven miles and put up a sod ranch, sold liquor and later Calvin Blanchard Hartwell came into possession of it." Hartwell family sources report: "We have no record of the early owner other than grandfather Calvin Blanchard. We have always understood that he bought out a claim." Calvin Blanchard and his wife gave the land for the District 7 School which was a gathering place for the early settlers. Mrs. Hartwell was a devout Methodist, and she helped organize the Methodist Church in Clarksville. Calvin B. Hartwell died on February 22, 1878, and is buried at Fairview Cemetery, north of Clarks. His daughter, Laura Jane, and granddaughter, Ruth Malina, are also buried there. After his death, the family remained on Junction Ranch until 1882. All the children had married except Amos E. and Malina Alice, who stayed with their mother. On June 26, 1883, Malina was married to Hans Kokjer and moved into Clarksville. Elizabeth Ragsdale Hartwell spent her last years living with her daughter, Malina and died on November 30, 1916, at the age of ninety-seven years. Family records show that she requested to be buried in the Clarks Town Cemetery and was.

Amos E., the youngest child, attended Nebraska University from 1882-1884 and then became interested in a general mercantile store in Clarksville in association with his brother, John. On May 4, 1887, in Clarksville, he married Ruth A. Richardson, a native of Eagle, New York. To their union seven children were born, namely: E. Edgar, Gladys, Merwyn Austin, Carl Blanchard, R. Richardson,

Hartwell Family Reunion, circa 1905, at Ed Hartwell's home in Clarks. Back row, left to right: Edgar Hartwell Jr., Hans Kokjer Jr., Rose Kokjer, Mat Kokjer, Malina Kokjer, Meta Kokjer, Ed Hartwell Sr., Thomas Kokjer, Cora McLean, Bob McLean. Seated on chairs: John McLean, Mary McLean, Rose Carter, Grandma Hartwell, Carrie Poland, Nettie Hartwell. First row on the ground: Merwin Hartwell, Wallace Brown, Maud Brown, Lina Carter, Bess McLean, Mary Hartwell. Front row: Dick Hartwell, Laura Hartwell, Edwin Brown, Gladys Hartwell, Emerson Kokjer. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

Mary A., and Laura E. All of these children graduated from Clarks High School except Merwyn Austin who was an invalid. Amos E. Hartwell died in Lincoln, on August 1, 1935, followed by his wife's death three weeks later to the day.

Meta Kay, of Clarks, is a granddaughter of Calvin Blanchard and Elizabeth Hartwell, as is Gladys Hartwell of Omaha. Mrs. Fritz Bender and Betty and Isabel Brown (Clarks residents) are great-granddaughters of this pioneer couple.

BIRTH OF A TOWN

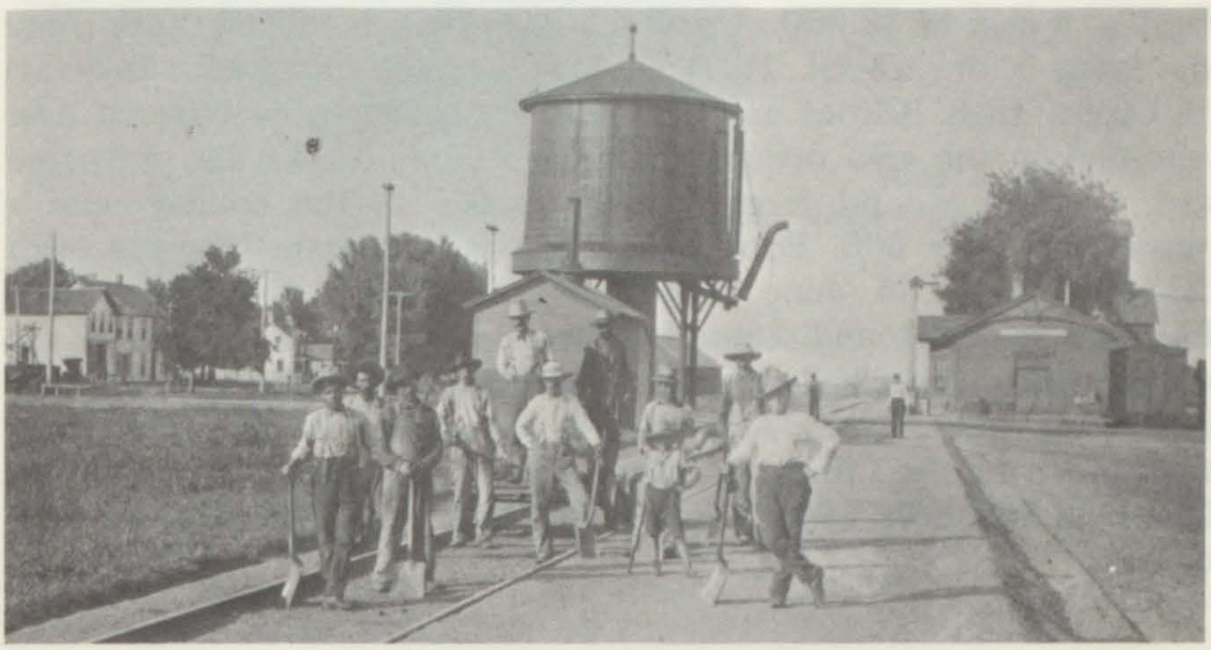
On April 1, 1865, Calvin Blanchard Hartwell stopped his wagons on a site three miles from the present northeast section of Clarks. He had come to open a ranch for the stage coach traveling public. Near the ranch, which he called Junction Ranch, were the Pawnee Indians. They were a friendly tribe who camped along the

banks of the Platte River and used Junction Ranch as a trading post. Gladys Hartwell recollects, "I remember my father telling me of his boyhood. He played with the Pawnee Indians and both he and Aunt Lina (Malina Alice) could speak their language. When they didn't want us to know what they were saying, they spoke Pawnee."

In 1866 the permanent village of Clarksville was platted by the Union Pacific Railroad and named after the railroad superintendent, Silas H. H. Clark. In July, 1870 Merrick County was sectioned into precincts. The area within the Eastern district was thereafter known as Clarksville Precinct. In 1869, the Clarksville Post Office was established with Mr. Kerr, postmaster. He accidentally shot himself while on a trip to Lone Tree (Central City). Religious services were first held during the winter of 1869-1870 in the Hartwell home by an itinerant, Methodist preacher, Reverend David Marquette. Catholic services were held in the home of John Higgins on September 21, by Father Ryan, a missionary from Columbus, Nebraska. The first school was opened in September, 1871, with Mary Walkey, teacher. Classes were held in a sod shanty erected on Calvin Blanchard Hartwell's land and it gave the ten students a sixth grade education. In 1889, the school year was shortened from ten months to nine and

Clarks Band in 1884. Top row: George Agnew, Madsen Kokjer, unknown, John Hartwell, Sylvanus Starret. Middle row: Hans Kokjer, Jordan Kokjer, Granville Smith, unknown. Front row: John Carter, unknown. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

Clarks Decoration Day Services. Men, left to right: Dunam, Stearns, Willits, Whetheral, Leamons, unknown, unknown, Skutt, Coyle, unknown, Morse, Heater, S. Shrantz, unknown, W. Cosner, unknown, J. Wilson, J. Morse, S. C. Purdy, J. McClintic, A. M. White, unknown. Women, left to right: Mrs. G. J. Smith, Mrs. A. M. White, Mrs. H. Mastin, Mrs. E. Clifton, Mrs. Al Morse. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)



The original Union Pacific Depot and first water tower. Also shown are the West Hotel, Bill Higgins home, and railroad section crew at Clarks. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

six teachers were on the faculty. T. K. Galvin was superintendent at a salary of $85 per month. In the spring of 1871, the first Sunday school was organized by A. P. Daniels as superintendent. It was known as the Union Sunday School. The first general store and the first house built in Clarksville was in 1871 by Mr. L. B. McIntyre on North Millard Street. The only other building in town was the Union Pacific section house built in July of that same year. In 1888 Douglas Store was established by Mr. William Douglas, and it may have the longest record in Merrick County history for time in business. The first newspaper in Clarksville was the CLARKS MESSENGER with its first issue on May 4, 1878. Its editor was James J. Krieder. The following year he suddenly disappeared, and two years later the CLARKS ENTERPRISE was established. In 1950, the CLARKS NEWS AND SILVER CREEK SAND was purchased and printed in Clarks by Mr. John B. Carter, a current Clarks resident.

In 1877 Nebraska was a state of farmers in a nation where 70% of the population were engaged in farming. Hords of grasshoppers arrived on July 21, 1874, and left five days later. An early settler wrote, "They darkened the sky at midday and the numbers were so great that they actually stopped trains by swarming on the rails. The engines' drive wheels could not secure traction." In 1877, the bridge at Clarksville was built at a cost of $15,000. During that time the Platte River was spanned by four wagon bridges within a distance of forty-five miles. In 1880 temperance fighting broke out and a saloon in Lone Tree was dynamited. During the 1880's prices rose and immigration flourished. Grover Cleveland was elected president of the United States. In 1881, the second Clarksville schoolhouse was built at a cost of $3,000. A new school bell made in New York State was hung in the school. The year 1887 saw the first graduating class of Clarks High School and in 1888 the worst snow blizzard ever recorded in the area occurred. In the 1890's Clarksville prospered and was the second largest town in size in the county with a population over 600. Soon the Union Pacific main line was built through town. In June, 1891, a county-wide flood occurred, followed in 1893 and 1895 by severe droughts. The turn of the century saw organized athletics in the Clarks school; track and basketball were offered. According to newspapers of that era farmers were receiving the following rates for their grain and produce: wheat 50¢, oats 15¢, corn 19½¢, hogs $3.20, butter 10¢, potatoes 25¢ per bushel.

Chapter 2

Around Clarks in Early Days

Ruth A. and
Amos Edgar Hartwell

The following material consists of excerpts from stories told by Amos E. Hartwell and published in the Clarks Enterprise during the year 1933:

> Mr. Hartwell states he had no opportunity to attend school until he was seven years old. He and his older sisters, Rose and Malina later went to Eagle Island which was the station seven miles east of Junction Ranch. The station was conducted by John McLean, the husband of Mr. Hartwell's sister, Mary. The railroad had been built through here by that time and the night operator of the depot at the new little town of Silver Creek agreed to teach the three children for $5 a week for each one. For three weeks the children stayed with the McLean's, and received instruction. The $15 spent on the boy's education was apparently wasted for he says, "I didn't like the man and was afraid of him, and so didn't learn very much." The following year, a school was conducted in the home of his brother, John Hartwell, on his homestead just south of Clarks. This was about three miles from Junction Ranch. Besides the three young Hartwells this school was attended by Will Kerr, Ed, Hattie and Johnnie Higgins, John, Pete, and Maggie Craven and Patty McDermott. The teacher was Miss Libbie McGrath and this first real school and teacher made a lasting impression on the small boy's mind. He liked her and learned fast, being able to complete the second and third reader in the three months the school

lasted. The teacher stayed at the home of people who lived on a nearby farm, but she finally had to give up the school because the long walk was getting too much for her. Her father completed the term for her.

"Towards the end of the war 1,000 soldiers of the Kansas Seventh Regiment traveled along the Military Road on their way to Fort Kearny to be mustered-out of the service. They came to Junction Ranch and camped about 300 yards from the house. A few soldiers approached Calvin Blanchard and asked for some watermelons whereupon he told them he had a melon patch but that the melons were not yet ripe. The high-spirited soldiers rode into the patch and picked all of the larger melons and dug three-fourths of an acre of potatoes taking the nice, large ones. In the morning they filled their wagons with green corn and took it with them for their dinner. A few hours later the wagon supply train arrived and father (Calvin Blanchard Hartwell) explained to the officers the situation, they took the time and trouble to appraise the damage. A letter was written and sent by stage which reached Fort Kearny before the looters did. From each soldier's pay was deducted his share of the damage to father's crops. We heard afterwards those soldiers cussed that old ranchman and wished they could kill him. Mother (Mrs. Elizabeth Hartwell) always said she would rather see the Indians come than the soldiers."

Mr. Hartwell hauled wheat to the mill at Schuyler. He would start very early in the morning with a team of mules hitched to his wagon. "All day long the mules plodded on along the highway to the northeast. One of the chief difficulties of the trip was the crossing of the Loup River this side of Columbus. There was a bridge across the main channel but the shallow part had to be forded. To do this with a heavily-loaded wagon was no easy task. Sometimes he had to back-up the mules across the bridge, unload half of the wheat, then take the remainder across, unload it to the ground, return for the first half and cross with that. They usually planned to spend the first night at Columbus. Jim North kept a livery stable at Columbus where young Hartwell put up his mules for the night. Then, with North's consent he would climb to the hayloft and sleep. The next day he would continue his journey to the Wells and Nieman Mill where sometimes he would have to wait two or three days for a grist."

At the time the Hartwell family came to this part of Nebraska the Pawnee Indians were not hostile but they annoyed the settlers by begging and stealing. There were no trees in the Platte Valley so the settlers drove to the Loup River starting very early in the morning as soon as it was light. "They would cut wood all day, pile the trimmed logs on their wagons and start for home. Sometimes the Pawnees would appear and make them unload the wagon and go home without it. It was possible to hire the Indian squaws to work. They would husk corn, dig potatoes and cut wood for 25¢ a day. During the three years (1865-68) that Junction Ranch was a trading post, there would sometimes be 200 or 300 buffalo robes on hand at one time. The nearest buffalo were found in Wood River. At times the old ranch was something like a town with 300 to 400 people with their horses and cattle camping about. The Mormons stopped there on their way west. The Pawnees came to the ranch to acquire their needs. When the Hartwell family saw the Indians coming, the three youngest — Rose, Malina and Ed would hurry to the store to help guard the goods.

Twice each year in the late fall and in February the Indians would leave the Platte Valley for a time and travel south to the Republican River to hunt. They took their tents, ponies, poles, squaws and papooses with them. It was on one of these hunts that 700 Sioux warriors came upon 400 Pawnees and massacred nearly all of them including women and children. The Sioux achieved victory by their superior numbers even though the Pawnees were larger framed and stronger people. Major Frank North considered one Pawnee equal to three Sioux in warfare as the Pawnees understood military tactics as well as the Indian way."

HISTORY OF THE TOWN BOARD

The first town board meeting was on March 14, 1885. Mr. G. Agnew, J. C. Hartwell, S. Chesley, Ed Richardson and E. G. Brindle were appointed by the county commissioners at Central City as the first trustees of the village of Clarksville. The first election held in Clarks took place on April 7, 1885, and five village trustees were elected. John Hartwell was elected chairman of the board and Franklin Sweet, clerk.

In the late 1880's ordinances were passed prohibiting dogs from running at large, punishing vagrancy, and one prohibiting people from jumping on and off a train in motion. In 1887, a resolution was

Clarks Town Board, circa 1890. Back row: Hans M. Kokjer, Mr. Thompson. Middle row: E. A. Richardson, unknown. Front row: Mayor W. R. Morse, Sylvanis Starret, Mr. Brohman. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

passed to fence the village cemetery and Louis Schwatz was appointed sexton. The cost of having a grave dug was $3. During that year F. A. Noble was elected captain of Hose Company #1, Clarks Fire Department. The village marshall's salary was $10 per month. At the turn of the century special duty deputy marshalls were hired for the day and night of July 4th.

During the early 1900's strict fines were imposed and collected. A resolution was passed, unanimously, by the board instructing the town's law officers to "arrest any and all persons found in the village using profane language, vulgar or indecent language, intoxicated, or disturbing the peace and take them before the proper officer for trial."

April 14, 1890 — A new resolution was passed stating that all dogs not licensed would be shot by the village marshall. He later produced a bill for the cost of shooting ten dogs.

August, 1893 — The first reward poster ($50) was posted in Clarks for the arrest "of the person or persons guilty of grave molesting at the village cemetery." The board also decided to appropriate all money collected from fines and licenses to School District II of Merrick County. A saloon license was issued for $500 during that time.

April, 1894 — Second reward poster was issued "for the person who burglarized the store of I. H. Castle on the nite of April 6." Other crimes were vagrancy, theft, and inflicting damage on farm machinery, usually reapers.

March, 1896 — Scarlet Fever! Dr. E. L. Robinson made some "hygienic suggestions" at a town board meeting to prevent the spread of the disease. The board printed 500 copies and gave them to all village citizens.

October, 1899 — $78.25 was appropriated for the purchase of 21 uniforms for the Fire Department.

December, 1900 — Smallpox epidemic! The town board established a Board of Health and served notice upon the manager of the hotels and Opera House that quarantines were being issued against various citizens. "The following are hereby prohibited from entering the village of Clarks until notification that the quarantine has been raised: Charles Simmons, James Lel, Nat Chisley, Drew Chisley, Bett Teacher, T. A. Biggs, John Boen." The board also issued quarantine statements "on all other persons who are or have been recently living with such families."

March 29, 1904 — The board granted a franchise to Walter Chamberlain to "erect, construct, install and maintain an electric light plant in Clarks."

August 15, 1905 — The Board ordered the Union Pacific Railroad to install and maintain "a light of not less than 32 Cp. (candle power) on each crossing of the railroad main lines across Morse and George Street during the hours of darkness that the Clarks Electric Light Company furnishes light." At that time there were a total of thirty-seven street lights in town.

November 11, 1919 — A severe coal shortage occurred in town during an unusually severe winter. The board requested the Union Pacific Railroad to ship two cars of coal to the village, one consigned to the T. B. Hord Grain Company. The second to J. W. Finnell Lumber Company as coal dealers of Clarks. The board pledged to oversee an equitable coal distribution.

1920's — During these years many citizens objected to the use of public streets and alleys by carnivals as there was "some trouble and disturbances." The board declared "we do hereby prohibit the use of streets and alleys for the use of any carnival or similar attraction."

The 1976 village board members are Mayor W. H. Kohl, Dennis Spires, Robert Douglas, Leonard Strobel, and James Glasgow. Mrs. Lynda Strobel is village clerk and Mrs. Diane Jacobi serves as Treasurer. The board meets in the City Hall on the first Tuesday of each month. The present village marshall is Mr. Neil Miller.

Clarks, 1911

Depot, Clarks, Neb.

Members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union of Clarks, Neb., 1910. Advocates of this cause believed in equal suffrage because "God created humanity free and equal. Because the mere accident of sex is an unfair qualification for citizenship. Because women have interests which need special representation. Men cannot fitly represent women. Women need the ballot to protect property, person, and children. Because the ballot is the only weapon which can kill the saloon, the chief enemy of the home, the church and society. Prayers, moral suasion, social agencies and all other influences directed against saloon power are, in the last analysis, triumphant only as they crystalize in the ballot box."

Chapter 3

Indian Massacre, Fire and Tornado

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Frank Morgan were freight haulers and during the summer of 1864 they were journeying to Denver City with their wagons. On August 6 they camped east of the Plumb Creek Station on the California Trail, and there joined nine other wagons. They stayed the night and early the next morning started west. They were surrounded and attacked by a band of Ogallala, Sioux Indians led by Chief Big Crow. Mrs. Morgan (19 years old) saw her husband, brother, cousins, and a dozen others killed and scalped and their bodies mutilated. The Indians set fire to the wagons and took her captive. She wrote in her diary that they taunted her by tying her brother's scalp to the horn of her saddle. She was held captive for months and finally ransomed and returned to Fort Laramie to her parents. It was said that a small boy also was taken prisoner with her but he subsequently died on the trail.

On Highway 23 at the east edge of Bertrand signs point the route to the massacre site which is known as the Plum Creek Cemetery. The following is a personal account written by Mr. James Green of the Plum Creek Massacre. Mr. Green was the grandfather of Walter A. Green, who presently resides in Clarks, and the great-grandfather of Betty (Mrs. Ira) Reisener, of Clarks. On April 21, 1963, the Sunday World Herald Magazine, featured an article about the massacre which correlates, perfectly, with James Green's account.

> "In the spring of 1860, I went with my parents to Pike's Peak where I passed the time until January, 1862. Then I and my brother S. S. Green, now of Schuyler, Nebraska, started, each with an ox team from Denver to Omaha after freight. From January to November in the year 1862 we made three round trips from Denver to Omaha, driving 3600 miles in eleven months with 'ox-mobile.'
>
> In the spring of '63, my brother went to Montana. At this time I exchanged my cattle for a mule team and made one trip with them in the early summer of 1863. While in Omaha I became entangled in the famous Judge Tator trial for the murder of his friend Mr. Isaac Neff, and I think I was the most important witness in the case. The accused

was convicted and executed sometime in the fall of '63. It was, I believe, the first legal execution in the territory.

Being well pleased with the country around Shinn's Ferry, about seven miles west of the present city of Schuyler, I came back from Denver, and squatted on a piece of land where the present station of Edholm now stands. On May 30, 1864, I was married to Miss Elizabeth Garrett who lived with her parents twenty miles east of me in Saunders County. Not long after this, some time in July, I got a hankering for the old Rockies again and we loaded our traps in the wagon and started across the Plains fully expecting to make our future home somewhere along the foot of the Rocky Mountains. At the time we started there was some faint rumor that the Indians were going to cause trouble and on arriving at Fort Kearny, 125 miles west, the officers there were advising the emigrants to travel in large companies for self-protection, but being perfectly familiar with the country and also with the Indians for they were always in evidence along the route, we proceeded on our way and went as far as Cottonwood Springs, afterward and the present Fort McPherson.

On our arrival at this point the air was full of rumors of depredations further west and it was said that one man had been killed and his stock run off. After due consideration we concluded the best thing to do was to turn back and wait a year when perhaps the Indian troubles would be settled.

So early in the morning, August 6, we turned our oxen to the east and drove to Gillman's Ranch, twelve miles east, and went in camp one half mile east of the ranch, on the bank of the river. The river was full of little towheads and small channels a few inches deep, trickling over the sand. After we had been in camp perhaps one and one-half hours and I was sitting on the wagon-tongue thinking of hooking up, all of a sudden, with out any apparent noise nine of the biggest blackest war-painted Indians, I ever saw, suddenly appeared from out of the river, all riding good horses. They at once began to parley, some of them could talk pretty good, wanting to trade ponies for squaw. As my wife sat on the wagon in plain sight of them they raised their bids from one to four ponies for her.

All at once the whole party struck out for the Bluffs on the full run, which for the moment was a puzzle for me, but the mystery was soon solved, for on looking down

the road I saw a troop of cavalry, that was being sent from Fort Kearny to Cottonwood Springs within a mile of us. This troop of cavalry were to establish an out-post near where the trouble was expected. I don't think we would have been disturbed by these Indians at this time only in a badgering way and my reason for this belief will be given later.

From this camp we drove on for one and a half days. We camped this time at what was called Deserted Ranch, a place on a dry gulch where someone had started a ranch and gave it up before completion.

Soon after going into camp here, a mule train, consisting of ten four-mule teams drove from the east and went into camp on the north side of the road about one hundred yards from us. This was August 7, 1864. This belonged to Frank Morton of Sidney, Iowa, of which I will speak more, later.

Early in the morning of August 8, we broke camp and made what was called a "breakfast drive," a very common thing in those days. We drove the twenty-one mile point and went into camp about ten o'clock for our breakfast. We had been there but a short time when the stagecoach passed us on the double quick, going east and the driver shouted that we had better get out of there as there were ten or twelve dead men laying in the road a little ways above there.

Yet with all this I could hardly believe that there was any thing unusual so I hitched up our team and drove four miles to the seventeen mile point, seventeen miles from Kearney. While there in camp, a troop of cavalry came up from the Fort on the double quick.

The Captain halted and asked where I camped last night and when I told him at the old soddy, he asked if I saw any Indians. I told him I did not. "Well," he said, "its damn strange for just where you say you camped last night there was reported that ten or twelve people killed and one woman taken prisoner and their mules run off and wagon burned."

And now comes that part of my story that if there is such a thing as Providence interfering or assisting anyone, it certainly showed its fullhand in our case from the time we turned around at Cottonwood Springs until we passed on and escaped that massacre, known as the Plum Creek Massacre. For it is a fact that the people killed in that raid were the same people that we camped near the night

before, and the fact that we made an early drive that morning was the only reason that we escaped. Again when I tell you that Mrs. Morton, who was with her husband on this trip, was an old school mate and chum of my wife and the further fact they failed to recognize each other in our respective camps must be another act credited to Providence.

The people slain in this outfit consisted of Frank Morton, owner of the outfit, of Sidney, Iowa, and ten drivers, and a colored cook. Mrs. Morton was taken prisoner and remained with the Indians for about five months, when she was rescued through some friendly Indians and was taken to Denver and finally reached her friends again.

Another and most remarkable escape occurred at this time. About four miles east of our camp was a new ranch owned by a German called "Dutch Smith." On our drive that morning as we passed the Smith place he was seated in a buggy and his wife was pleading to go along, they were going to Kearny, but he seemed to be quite anxious for her to remain at home. But, however, she prevailed for within one half mile they passed us on the road to Kearney and the Indians that committed the murders at the Morton Camp followed down the road as far as Smith's place, killed the hired man, run off his stock and burned his buildings. Whether these different escapes all just happened or whether the half of Providence was guiding us are things that to me are incomprehensible."

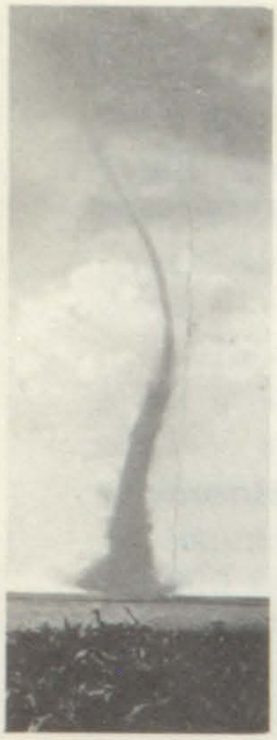
Source — CENTRAL CITY COURIER,
Thursday, August 2, 1894.

AN APPALLING CALAMITY — A LARGE PORTION OF THE VILLAGE OF CLARKS DESTROYED BY FIRE

"Following upon the destructive hot winds of last Thursday came the most destructive fire that has ever taken place in Merrick County. Perhaps half of the business property of our neighboring town of Clarks went up in flames last Monday morning at about 5 o'clock. The fire originated in an old granary back of J. C. Douglas' billiard hall, and is said, by some, to have been caused by lightning, but no one appears to be certain about it. The

town has but little fire protection, except for hydrant connection with the Union Pacific tank but it is of limited capacity. The burned parts take in nearly all of the block north of the depot and a small section of the east side of the next block west. The following is a statement of losses and insurance against the same . . . "

Property and Owner	$ Amount Lost	Insurance
Merrick County Bank	200	none
Store — R. Colwell	1,500	1,000
House — R. Colwell	200	none
Store — R. T. Wetherill	1,000	none
Stock — R. T. Wetherill	500	none
J. M. Bates	800	500
Store — S. H. Westgate	1,200	800
Stock — S. H. Westgate	700	500
Store & Stock — J. C. Hartwell	3,000	1,600
Barber Shop — E. O. Davis	50	300
Postoffice	Postmaster Logan saved all the mail bags and appliances	
Stock & Office — W. R. Morse	2,000	none
Stock — W. R. Morse	200	none
Store — E. A. Richardson	1,500	1,200
Billiard Hall — J. C. Douglas	1,000	700
Furniture, etc. — J. C. Douglas	200	none
Saloon — S. Naughton	1,200	800
Building — Mrs. J. R. Richardson	300	none
Building — C. Pierson	200	none
Office — H. Beardsley	250	none
West Hotel	200	none
Harness shop & Stock — Jas. Wayman	500	none
Store — H. Westveer	1,500	100
Restaurant — D.P. Gray	700	,500
Lunchroom & Furniture	300	none
Hardware Store — W. M. Harris	200	none
Fruit — E. E. Ross	50	none
Flour — I. N. Allen	400	none
Postoffice Furniture	200	none
Merchandise — F. L. Moody	3,000	3,000
Merchandising — F. A. Stansberry	3,000	1,000
Drug Store — E. G. Rust	2,500	1,000
On East Side, Block 20	1,000	none



This photo was taken 4½ miles from the tornado.

The ruins of Roach's Cafe, the site presently occupied by Merriman's Tavern.

The George Dudney home.

CLARKS ENTERPRISE, Friday, May 11, 1928

"A terrible cyclone hit Clarks on Wednesday evening, May 2, 1928, at 5 p.m. where damage to buildings and dwellings was estimated at $150,000. A black cloud of dirt was first noticed in the southwest traveling north when it suddenly turned east and swept the town. There were a considerable number of people on the street. The cyclone picked up buildings, telephone poles and big, cottonwood trees. Many farms were partially destroyed (W. Feehan, James Booth, M. Shonsey's cattle ranch, Fred Brown home and Fred Philbrook place.) This was all done in a period of less than three minutes. An estimated 60,000 people visited Clarks in their autos to view the ruins. Traffic cops were utilized at intersections. At one time cars were lined

on the Lincoln Highway for a mile or two on either side of Clarks. Many homes will have to be rebuilt completely. Many buildings of business were unroofed, fronts blown down, and plateglass windows broken. Mrs. O. A. Bittinger, Mrs. W. J. Pollard and two teachers, Miss Jones and Miss Corman were downtown in the storm. Miss Corman was rolled an entire block before being rescued. Mrs. Bittinger and the other ladies lay upon the paving hanging onto nearby tree sprouts to stay them. Nearly every residence north of the Union Pacific tracks was damaged."

Campbell's Corner (where Estate Builders, Inc., stands now).

Virgil Baynes home.

Chapter 4

Church and Cemetery Histories

SAINT PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

This church was established as a mission in the late 1860's and administered by Father Ryan of Columbus. Services were held in the old section house one mile east of the present town of Clarks. The earliest recorded marriages were: Degal Welsh and Mary Casey in

Saint Peter's Catholic Church, Clarks, 1976.

1870, Silvanus Starrett and Mary Douglas in 1878, Thomas McDermott and Fanny Macwell in 1879, Edward M. Coleman and Mary A. Lamb in 1880 and Thomas C. Cantwell and Mollie E. Smith, also 1880. Between 1871 and 1881 thirteen babies were baptized. The first recorded burial in the Catholic Town Cemetery was that of Edward Higgins in December 1888.

In 1871, the Union Pacific Railroad deeded for church purposes a plot of ground to John Higgins and Luke Lamb, as trustees for the Catholic Church of Clarksville. Early in 1872, a frame church was erected on what is now Lot 5 in Block 12 of the present town of Clarks. Other pastors were Father Geary, in 1881 (parishioners

numbered 23 families), Fathers Gleason, Delfors, and O'Connor administered from Central City. With the appointment of Father John Kunkel as pastor in 1918, the present parish was incorporated and eight years later, the new, brick, church was erected on its present location. The new church was to cost about $35,000 with the parishioners volunteering their services by hauling all material from the depot and by excavating the basement. This volunteer effort was estimated at saving $2,000. In 1927, the building was completed and dedicated. Twenty years later in 1947, high underground water pressure made it necessary to lay a new concrete floor in the church basement. Father Kunkel served the parish thirty years before being transferred to St. Francis Parish in Omaha in 1948. He died in 1956.

Father George Kempler was appointed temporary administrator for three months until on September 23, 1948, when Father Paul Kannaby was assigned pastor. During his tenure he acquired the services of the Sisters from Notre Dame Convent in Omaha for the religious teaching of the children. In a few years, his health began to fail and the Benedictine Fathers from Elkhorn served the parish. Father Kannaby retired in 1961 and died in 1967. In June of 1961, Father John Koros was assigned pastor. At this time the rectory was in need of repairs and complete renovation. The people realized that their priest would need something better and so at a parish meeting they voted to build a new rectory. The building committee consisted of Dr. R. R. Douglas, M.D., Henry Gaver, Henry Galus and Donald Douglas. Financial committee members were Vincent Douglas, Vinson Bittinger, and Mrs. Ralph Cook. On August 6, 1961, the ground-breaking ceremony took place. The old rectory was sold at auction. In 1962, Father Koros occupied the new brick rectory. The blessing of the new rectory was postponed several times because of the storms but was finally done by Rt. Rev. T. H. Buelt of Elgin, Nebraska, on April 29, 1962. During the tenure of Father Koros the religious training of the children was taken care of by the Sisters of the Resurrection from Fullerton and the dedicated ladies of the parish. Father Richard A. Wolbach was assigned pastor in 1965. The decision to redecorate the church was made and to furnish it according to the new changes in the Liturgy. New pews, lighting system, carpeting and tiling were finished in 1966. In September 1967, the church along with four other Catholic parishes organized a Catechetical Center for religious training. The Sisters of Saint Joseph worked in the program as well as lay teachers. Father Wolbach left many friends in Clarks whom he visits whenever he is near our area; he is presently serving the parishioners in Pender, Nebraska. In 1968, Father John Mines was appointed to the Clarks church. Father Mines retired due to poor health and died in 1972.

St. Peter's Church Altar Society officers, 1976. Left to right: Vice President Barbara Kohl, President Pat Bittinger, Treasurer Pat Ksiazek, Secretary Diane Schultz.

Entrance to Clarks and Calvary Cemeteries.

The present pastor is Father Joseph L. Kaup, a native of Stuart, Nebraska. Father Kaup was appointed to Saint Peter's Church, Clarks on June 16, 1971. He formerly served the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Margaret Mary's parishes in Omaha. Before his appointment he worked for fifteen years at Saint Boniface Parish in Monterey, Nebraska. Father was also a religion instructor at Central Catholic School in West Point, Nebraska. Since 1971, Father has officiated at the marriage of twenty-five couples and has baptized sixty-four children at Saint Peter's Church.

Saint Peter's Altar Society has a present membership of eighty-seven ladies whose activities and projects vary with the needs of the parish. 1976 officers are President Pat (Mrs. Michael) Bittinger, Vice-President Barbara (Mrs. J. F. Jr.) Kohl, Secretary Diane (Mrs. Dave) Schultz, Treasurer Pat (Mrs. Jim) Ksiazek. The men's organization known as the Holy Name Society, is led by President Gene Urkoski and Father Kaup, Moderator. Current members of the Cemetery Board are Vinson Bittinger, President, Don Beck, Wm. Douglas and John Hannappel.

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL

The first church building erected in Clarksville was Saint Paul's Episcopal in 1873. An Episcopal organization was previously assembled in 1871. Reverend Samuel Goodnle was in charge of the society whose membership numbered fifty. The value of the church property at that time was $2,000. At present there are no available records to tell us when this church closed or how long it served its members.

THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

In 1873 a Union Church building was erected on the site of the present Congregational Church. This building passed into the hands of Congregationalists and in 1878 the First Congregational Church was organized. The charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. W.R . Morse, Henry Beardsley, J. B. Philbrook, R. E. Wetherel, J. D. Porter, L. M. Chamberlain, J. H. Castle, S. H. Westgate, T. L. Dixon, M. M. Kokjer, J. M. Kokjer, J. T. McLean, Mrs. H. M. Lyons, W. C. Robinson and C. L. Hatch. The first pastor was Benjimin S. Dean, a circuit rider of the area. In the year 1884, the Reverend George S. Biscoe became the first resident pastor.

Congregational Church, Clarks, 1976.

In 1886 the Reverend Brounjohn came directly over from England to become pastor and he lived in the house now owned by Joe Schneider. The Reverend Miss E. K. Henry became the pastor in 1888. Services were held every Sunday morning and evening and prayer meeting was on Wednesday nights. The Reverend J. A. Thome became pastor in 1889. The next pastor mentioned in the church records is the Reverend J. K. Storm. Sometime during this period the church bought the lot and house next to the church to serve as the

parsonage. In 1892 the Reverend Gardiner Jr. became the pastor. He was shared with the Silver Creek Congregational Church. In 1894 the Reverend Jordan M. Kokjer became the pastor of the church. The Reverend Mrs. Perkins served as pastor from the years 1894-96 and 1899-1903. From 1897-1898 the Reverend H. J. Hinmann served as pastor. During these years a Ladies Fellowship was organized and was instrumental in the life of the church.

In 1903 the church celebrated its Silver Anniversary, and in 1906 the Reverend W. H. LeBar became the pastor. The Reverend B. A. Baldwin served as pastor from 1906-1907. In 1908 the Reverend John Garrettson was ordained minister and the church joined the Blue Valley and Nebraska Association of Congregational Churches. Reverend C. J. Rives served as pastor from 1910-1913. In 1913 the Reverend J. H. Kramer became the minister and held this post until 1921. In 1915 the church voted to sell the old parsonage and build a new one. The price of the new house was not to exceed $3,500 and was to have 6 rooms. This is the present house of Bill Kohl.

In 1917 a committee consisting of Meta Key, Harriet Little, and Mrs. Marvin Chamberlain was appointed to investigate the possibility of a pipe organ for the church. In 1918 this committed reported that because of the war the money raised for the pipe organ should be used to purchase war savings bonds. During this time the following men served as pastors:

Reverend I. B. Baldwin	1922-1923
Reverend J. W. Foster	1923-1926
Reverend Mrs. Carvlon	1927-1929

In 1929 the church agreed to share ministers with the Methodist Church of Clarks. The minister at this time was the Reverend E. W. Price. This arrangement lasted until 1932. On September 30, 1932, the Reverend M. G. Jones came to the church. He was shared by the Silver Creek Church. He served as pastor until 1936. During the drought years the church suffered hard times but by the firm belief of its members and the grace of God the church remained open. During this time the church could not support a full-time minister and student ministers often served the church. They were:

Paul Wiegman	1936-1937
William Eller and	
Kenneth de Freeze	1940-1941
Paul de Freeze	1941-1942

During this time Dr. and Mrs. O. W. Carrol of Nebraska Central College in Central City filled the pulpit. In 1940 the church was remodeled and refurnished.

In 1942 the church again called a full-time minister. The Reverend C. D. Hayes accepted the call. He was shared by the

Arborville Congregational Church near Polk. The following three ministers were shared by Arborville and Clarks church. The Reverend Nixon Knight served as pastor from 1945-1946. Dr. E. Earle Eaton served as pastor from 1947-1952. In 1952 the church called the Reverend Paul Nelson to become pastor and he served until 1958. In 1953 the church celebrated its 75th anniversary. The Reverend Clinton Riser was pastor from 1958-1960.

Reverend Lester Felker was pastor from 1960-1961. In 1960 the members voted to tear down the old belfry and remodel the entire church. Also in this year the Ladies Aid Society bought the church's first electric organ. The church voted in the same year to leave the Blue Valley and Nebraska Association and voted to join the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference.

The Reverend Gorman Foley served as minister from 1961-1963. In 1964 the present building of the church was dedicated with our new minister Bernard Neikard in charge of the service. He served until 1966. In 1966 the Reverend Ralph Larson became the pastor of the church. In the fall of 1968 new stained glass windows were installed in the church. The Reverend Edmond Parker was pastor from 1972-1974. The Reverend Dallas Clausen was minister from 1974-1976. The present minister is the Reverend Ralph Larson.

The Congregational Church has held services in the same building for ninety-eight years. The oldest member of the church is Meta Key. She became a member in 1900. She served as organist of the church from 1913-1959.

METHODIST CHURCH

This church was built in 1879 and was called Somers Chapel in honor of Mrs. Somers Davis, a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She contributed $400 towards the cost of the building. Attached to

Methodist Church, 1976, Clarks.

the rear of the building was a four room parsonage. Mrs. Davis also contributed a 250 volume library for the Sunday School and in 1880 she sent a bell to the church as a Christmas gift. The congregation could not afford to build a belfry but placed four poles in front of the church as a temporary belfry. The following year the presiding Elder, T. B. Lemon, visited Mrs. Davis and revealed the condition of the organization. Mrs. Davis contributed an additional $200 to erect a belfry and vestibule. She also gave a large, pulpit, Bible to the Church. For many years her photograph was kept in the sanctuary and at present, it still remains in good condition within the church. In 1881 Reverend J. Buckley, father of Mrs. W. J. Fosbury, served three years as pastor. Many years later, after his retirement, he lived in the Fosbury home and sometimes filled the pulpit. Reverend A. L. Mickel came in 1893 and was pastor for three years. During his ministry the parsonage was built. During that time Fannie Bird became a member of the church. In 1885, Mrs. Mary Smith became a member. In 1900, Reverend G. B. Warren was pastor and preached in Clarks, Pierce Chapel, and Pleasant Hill every Sunday. He would preach a different sermon in the evening in Clarks. Records show that Reverend Warren received $500 a year from the three charges to support himself, his wife and three children and maintain a team of horses.

A wide variety of articles were built for the church during the ministries of Reverend Arthur Atack (1906), Reverend C. F. Luscher

Methodist Ladies Aid and Standard Bearer's Picnic, 1925. Top row: Genevieve Berger, Fern Beardsley, Helen Beck, Nettie Inbody, Florence Sampson Tipton, Mrs. Smith. Middle row: Mrs. John Sampson, Mrs. Wolfe, Mrs. Boberg, Mrs. Bintz, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Davis. Bottom row: Bernice Simmons, Ada Sampson, Ruth Beck, Neva Boberg, Lola Beck.

Methodist Church after the fire in 1947.

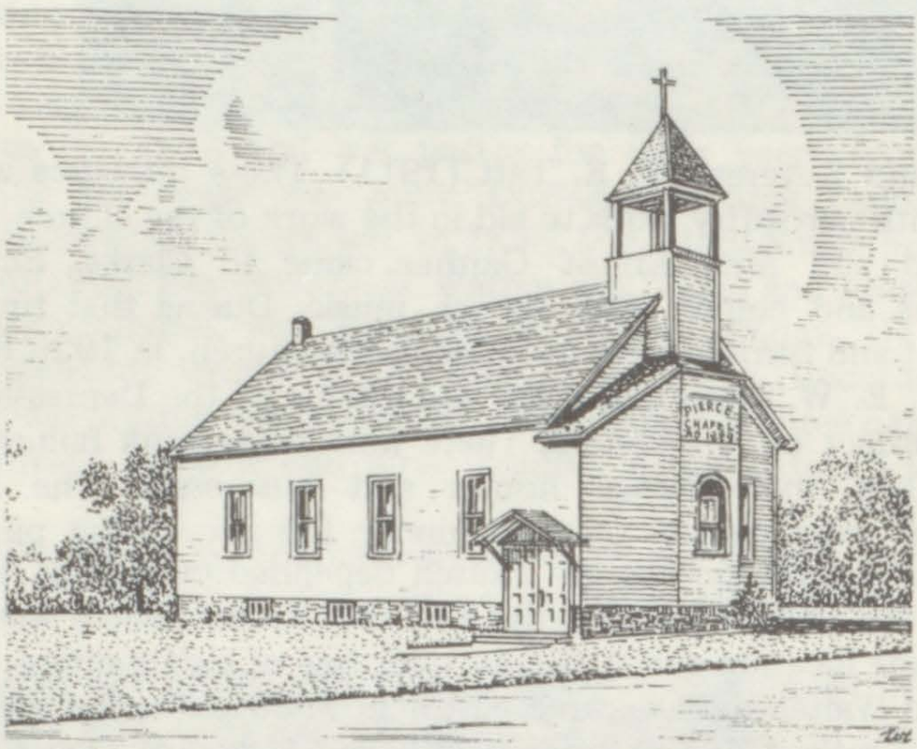
(1909) and Reverend S. E. Taft (1911). These ministers were also gifted with carpentry skills to aid in the work of the church. In 1923 Reverend and Mrs. Ernest Gaither came to Clarks. Both were musicians and helped with church music. During that time a full basement and furnace were installed in the church. In 1928 Reverend and Mrs. E. W. Price came and the effects of the Depression years had its effect on the church. There were three bank failures. Many people lost their farms, homes and businesses. The financial hardships were carried over to hinder the succeeding pastors. In 1943, for several months the church depended on supply ministers. In 1947 the church was destroyed by fire. A new church was erected at the same location and was dedicated, free of indebtedness in 1950. Reverend Walter Neth became pastor in 1953 and remained for nine years. He retired due to poor health and is being cared for by his daughter in O'Neill, Nebraska. Reverend and Mrs. Clyde Wells and family, Reverend Josephine Scahill, Reverend Tom Scahill, and Reverend and Mrs. Guy Savage ministered in Clarks a short time. Other ministers were Reverend and Mrs. Bill Cotant, Reverend Paul Johnson, Reverend Phil Bede, Reverend Mark Goad and Reverend and Mrs. Harry Blowey and family.

The first women's society was called Ladies Aid Society and later Ladies Social Circle. They organized chicken pie dinners, ice cream socials, pie suppers, and bazaars and served at farm sales. The organization was also known as the W.S.C.S. and is now known as U.M.W. The youth organization was first known as the Epworth League and then Youth Fellowship. It is presently known as the SR. and JR. M.Y.F.

Three Methodist girls became ministers' wives, namely: Florence Sampson, Neva Boberg and Mamie Noble. One young man, Delbert Sampson became a minister. The work of the church depends as much on the members as it does on the minister, for the ministers come and go, but the people remain.

PIERCE CHAPEL METHODIST CHURCH

In the year 1886, Reverend R. K. Pierce came to the Clarks area as pastor and in 1889 was instrumental in erecting Pierce Chapel Church. The church was originally erected two miles west and two miles south of its present site. In 1913 T. D. Betts and Warren Curry aided in moving the church structure to its present site. Vic Gleason and Jule Wilder moved the church with the steam engines of their threshing machines. One of the main conveniences for the move was to have the cemetery directly across the road from the church. Also



Pierce Chapel Church

the people that had been attending services at the Pleasant Hill school then joined the Pierce Chapel group. Reverend Wm. S. Sanders was the first pastor in the new location and in those days it required a good horse to make all the charges this pastor served. In 1914, $200 was raised to repair the church and put in a basement. During 1916-1917 it was painted and the furnace was put in with the chimney on the south side. In 1950, the church was completely remodeled and dedicated while Reverend L. R. Hansberry was pastor at a cost of $3,000. Pierce Chapel has many warm memories for everyone connected with this church—some of the things we all remember that don't seem present today are the delicious chicken suppers and the tasty homemade ice cream socials that were held to raise needed funds. Perhaps, many remember the good, old, chopping bees held to secure wood for winter use, but the great thing about these events was the wonderful fellowship that went along with each event.

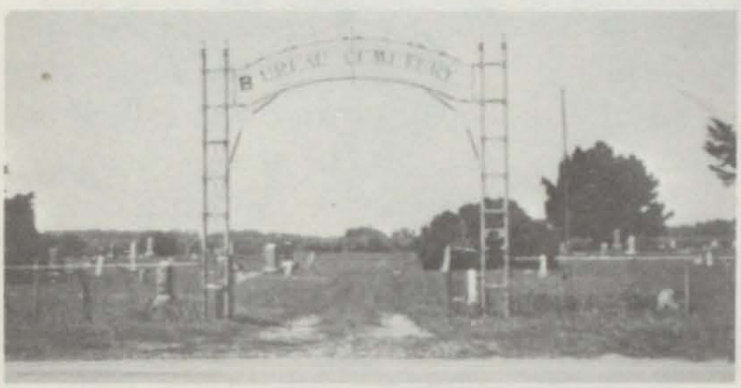
In 1961, the pastor, Reverend Walter Neth, was named Rural

Pastor of the Year at the annual Conference in Omaha. A bus-load of happy parishioners were on hand to share his joy.

In July, 1913, a group of ladies met at the home of Mrs. Tom Shively to organize a society to be called the Pierce Chapel Social Circle. Its object was for the social welfare of the community and to help in the running of the church. The officers were: President Mrs. G. A. McConnell, Vice-President Mrs. Bert Ferguson, Secretary Mrs. R. M. Kurtz. In 1944 the ladies decided to change W.S.C.S. The meetings were held in the homes of the ladies until the church was remodeled. Since then the meetings are held in the church on the first Thursday of the month. Special W.S.C.S. Life Memberships have been given to Mrs. Will Williams, Mrs. Josie Burger, Mrs. Flora Ferguson, Mrs. Katie Schultz, Mrs. Stanley Gregg, Mrs. Edith Curry, Mrs. Ralph Rose, Mrs. John Johnston, Mrs. Walter Beck, Mrs. Esther Peck and Mrs. Ethel Richards.

PIERCE CHAPEL CEMETERY
(THE BUREAU CEMETERY)

This cemetery is located on the principal highway between Clarks and Fullerton, about seven miles northwest of Clarks in what is known as the Pleasant Hill district. It had its origin in the year 1871 and came into being as the result of the short illness and death of a child. Her name was Susie Woods, little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Zenus Woods of Bureau County, Illinois, who were among the early pioneers to settle in that part of Nebraska. The area was wild and



Bureau Cemetery

untamed and the Indians claimed and overran the land. The terrain was wild prairie and there were no trees except along the rivers which were many miles away and difficult to reach. With the unexpected death of his little daughter, Mr. Woods was faced with the problem of how and where to bury her. To return her to Bureau County, Illinois, was out of the question. It was equally as impractical to attempt to drive to Columbus, thirty-five miles away to obtain lumber for the coffin. Also there was no established burial place in this vicinity. The Clarks cemetery was not established until a number of years later. It

was decided to bury her on their homestead, accordingly, he created a cemetery of one-half acre on the southwest corner of his homestead and in this new burial ground laid his daughter to rest. As there was no lumber available, Mr. Woods removed the doors from a homemade cupboard and with the help of Mr. Schranger and Mrs. William's father made a casket. For lining a sheet was used and her mother's wedding dress. Later other families of immigrants from Bureau County arrived and an old lady, Mrs. Shively died. She was also buried in the new cemetery. As time passed the cemetery became the resting place for an increasing number of early pioneers. As so many of these settlers were from Bureau County, they named the cemetery "Bureau." In time the cemetery had to be enlarged. Gus Schranger, also from Bureau County and a neighbor of Zenus Woods gave a half acre. The area joined the land previously set aside by Mr. Woods. Another of the early burials in the Bureau Cemetery was a man by the name of Osker Siferd. He and others were moving a threshing machine across county to Fort Kearny when they saw Indians approaching. He was not able to escape the Indians, so he crawled inside the threshing machine. The Indians killed the three other men and then set fire to the wooden machine and burned it with Siferd inside. His charred remains were later buried. A little, white, marble monument on the east side still stands to mark the spot where he was buried. Inscribed on the tombstone are the words "Burned by the Indians."

In the early days of the cemetery, a tract of land was opened up especially for Civil War Veterans. Many of them migrated in covered wagons, took up veteran's claims and began homesteading in the neighborhood. In one of these prairie schooners were a number of Civil War Vets who took up claims side by side, about one mile east of the cemetery. They arrived April 20, 1871. In order to establish a location for a home in that flat, treeless wilderness, they erected a marker in the form of a flag. It was made of a pole and the cover from a wagon. The name of some of those early pioneers from Bureau County who are buried in the Bureau Cemetery are: John Wesley and Henry Lumadue, Zenus Woods and his brother Lias, Agustus Schranger, Will Adams, Will Cosner, Joe Cosner, Albert Scudder, Ezra Heater, a Mr. Hutchinsen, Tom Morrison, Arthur Brown, Newton Kellogg, Romain Kellogg, a Mr. Storan, a Mr. Sciford and Liman Balcom. The cemetery has been enlarged many times and every Memorial Day many people come from long distances to decorate the graves of veterans and loved ones.

FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

A meeting was held at Fairview schoolhouse in School District 16, Merrick County on June 15, 1875, for the purpose of organizing

a cemetery association and incorporating it. Eleven men were present and a vote was taken to elect five trustees and one clerk. The following were elected: Samuel Batty, L. Slosson, Alfred Thomas, E. M. Southwell, J. B. Hath, and Clerk, Franklin Sweet.

Lots were priced at $2 each and plotted 12' x 16'. The price for digging a grave was $1.50 regardless of the season. The association decided to maintain four lots in the southeast corner of the cemetery for burial of the transient population.

Fairview Cemetery

CIVIL WAR VETERANS BURIED AT FAIRVIEW

John Morse	(1830-1913)	G.A.R. Co. F. 94-105, N.Y. Infantry
John McClintic	(1844-1919)	Private, Co. G., Ill. Infantry
T. J. Turpin	(1852-1880)	Co. D., 9th Penn. Cavalry
B. Cleveland		Sergeant, Co. C., 111th Ohio Infantry
Alfred Thomas	(1824-1906)	Co. F., 163 Ohio Infantry
Jared Kimball	(1826-1899)	Co. E., 104th Ill. Volunteer Infantry
Thomas Gannon	(1825-1919)	Co. D., 8th Ill. Cavalry

SEXTON'S RECORDS OF FAIRVIEW CEMETERY

Date of Interment	Deceased	AGE Yr.	Mo.	Day	Remarks
	Aaron V. Bradt				Son of V. Bradt
Jan. 22, 1876	Colwell				Son of R. Colwell
Feb. 26, 1876	Cole				
	Neadham				Sonof Smith C. & Mulia Neadham
Dec. 7, 1876	Gilbert			21	Infant son of Maggie Gilbert
June 18, 1876	Helen R. Slosson	33	1	13	Wife of J. L. Slosson
Apr. 8, 1877	Annie McClintic		1	15	Daughter of John & Mandilla McClintic
May 18, 1877	Willie George				Son of John & Lydia George

Aug. 10, 1876	Willie C. Morse		3	2	Son of M. & Alice Morse
Aug. 23, 1877	Mills				
Dec. 10, 1878	Emma Marshall		1		Daughter of Jerry & Arvilla Marshall
Aug. 23, 1877	Mills				
Jan. 7, 1879	Nettia Southwell	2	8	24	Daughter of Edward & Phalana Southwell
Feb. 9, 1879	Samuel Gilbert	60	9	21	Husband of Christina Gilbert
Feb. 16, 1879	Maryanne Swantwood	38	7	12	Wife of W. M. Swantwood
Apr. 16, 1879	Reuben H. Saket	18	1	4	Son of Wm. & Elizabeth C. Sacket
Aug. 27, 1879	Johnnie H. Morse		5	17	Son of Marinas and Alice Morse
Mar. 29, 1880	Levi Swantwood	59	7	4	Husband of Maryanne Swantwood
Apr. 1, 1880	Bertie May Foster	3	4	9	Daughter of H. & Alice Foster
June 11, 1880	Ama H. Cole	13	3	25	Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sarah Cole
June 23, 1880					Infant son of Eotes & A. C. Richardson
July 8, 1880	Mary Perl Towslee	2		23	Daughter of Darius T. & Pat Towslee
July 31, 1880	Jennie E. Lucas		2	5	Daughter of Theaphilns & Metta Lucas
Aug. 29, 1880	Harriet O. Hath	34	6	6	Wife of T. B. Hath
Sept. 19, 1880	Nellie C. Hall	1	8	28	Daughter of Isace & Sarah A. Hall
Oct. 6, 1880					Infant son of Darius T. & Pat Towslee
Oct. 11, 1880	Clod Foster			3	Son of Hamlet & Alice Foster
Oct. 17, 1880	Myrtal Ludey	1	11	14	Daughter of Ehy & Elizabeth Ludey
Dec. 13, 1880	Minnie Southwell	8	3		Daughter of Edward & Pilena Southwell
Dec. 17, 1880	Thomas J. Turpin	38	11	4	Husband of W. L. Turpin
Jan. 13, 1881				1	Son of J.P. & Cornelia Gewett
Jan. 29, 1881	Nelson A. Hath	12	10		Son of J.B. & Harriet O. Hath
Mar. 17, 1881	Leroy Barber	1	1	21	Son of S. & Vada Barber
May 16, 1881	Myrtle Richmond			21	Daughter of Ira C. & Jane Richmond
June 6, 1881	George W. Parish	23	2	19	
July 26, 1881	Richard Fifield	63			Father of R.W. Fifield
July 26, 1881	Mary A. Fifield	19	3	12	Wife of R.W. Fifield
Sept. 4, 1881	Eva May Reid	1	3	15	Daughter of S. & G. Reid
June 14, 1882				1	Infant son of Daniel & Sarah Honeycut
Aug. 22, 1882	Clarence D. Martin		7	25	Infant son of Samuel & Rose Martin
Sept. 17, 1882	Hariet L. Dustman	29	11	23	Wife of Jonathan Dustman
Feb. 28, 1883	Unis P. Lane		2	17	Daughter of H.G. & Etta B. Lane
Mar. 7, 1883	Almyna W. Lane	21	2		Daughter of John W. & Rebecca Lane
Feb. 24, 1883	Thomas L. Masingale			24	Son of Charles W. & Emma Masingale
Sept. 12, 1883	Mark S. Barber	1	1	19	Son of S. & Ada Barber
June 5, 1883	Rowland			1	Son of M.P. & Mary Rowland
Sept. 20, 1883	Honeycut				Infant son of Daniel & Sarah Honeycut
Apr. 5, 1883					Infant children of F.H. & Mary L. Barnes
Jan. 3, 1884	F.H. Barnes				Husband of Mary Barnes
Jan. 3, 1884	Robert Robertson				A stranger from Scotland
1884	Vendt				Child of Charles & Mrs. Vendt
Jan. 8, 1884	Harry Hartwell		10	11	Son of J.C. & M.E. Hartwell
Jan. 18, 1884	Maxwell			1	Infant child of Rt. & Mrs. Maxwell
Jan. 18, 1884	Daisy Buckley				Infant child of Joseph & Martha Buckley
Aug. 7, 1884	Minnie M. Yeoman	1	5	21	Daughter of G.W. & M.N. Yeoman
Nov. 27, 1884	William Kimberly				Husband of A.J. Kimberly
Nov. 27, 1884	S.C. Jones				
1884	Gannon				Father of Thomas Gannon
Nov. 27, 1884	B. McClintock				Son of William & Emma McClintock
1884	Hartwell				Infant child of J.C. & M.E. Hartwell
Aug. 24, 1884	Morris Leigh Cole	1	9	18	Son of Stephen L. & Jennie Cole
Feb. 27, 1899	Guy Rogers	2			Son of John Rogers — died of poison
Mar. 30, 1889					Child of Daniel Honeycut
May 8, 1889					Child of West Youngman
Mar. 18, 1885	Jacob Reid	72	6	10	
Oct. 1885					Child of West Masingalis
Dec. 19, 1885	Myrtle McClintic	6	9	2	Child of E. McClintic
Mar. 19, 1886	James Brown				
Apr. 9, 1886	James Johnston				
Aug. 8, 1886					Child of Robert McLean
Jan. 5, 1887					Child of Jonathan Pile
Mar. 30, 1887	Cecil Noble	6	2	1	Son of Henry & N.A. Noble
June, 1887	Sweed girl	7			

Apr. 30, 1887	May E. Dustman	22	1	19	
Jan. 4, 1888	Mrs. Boles				
Feb. 12, 1888					Child of Justus Allen
Mar. 4, 1888	Miss Asher				
Apr. 1888					Infant child of J.B. Brisborn
July 3, 1888	name unknown				
July, 1888	Susan Reid	66			
Aug. 18, 1888	Wm. McClintic				
Sept. 8, 1888	Miss Delia Reid	21	2	27	
	Wm. McLean				Removed June 22, 1911
Apr. 13, 1896	Loran Lane	5	6	2	Son of John W. & Maggie Lane
July, 1897	Wm. Morse				Son of Marinus Morse
Apr. 13, 1896	Elizabeth Sackett				Wife of Wm. Sackett
	George Graves				
Oct. 20, 1897	Mrs. E.B. Steadman	74			
Feb. 18, 1898	Mrs. Amy Richfield	72	7	14	
Nov. 1, 1898	Charles Sackett	28			
Dec. 7, 1898			2		Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. Milford Beckwith
Jan. 12, 1899	J.R. Kimball	72	7	2	Husband of Lucinder Kimball
Jan. 20, 1899	Mrs. John Hartwell	58			
Feb. 14, 1899	Mrs. S.A. Swantwood	73	8	15	Widow of Levi Swantwood
May 23, 1899			1		Child of James & Cora Gugan
Sept. 22, 1899	Mrs. A. Thomas	74			
Dec. 7, 1899	John C. McLean	62	7		Brother of Robert & Wm. McLean
Dec. 27, 1899	Catherine Hawthorne	65	10	15	Wife of George Hawthorne
Jan. 15, 1900	Samuel Lane	7	6		Son of John & Maggie Lane — killed by a cow
Mar. 2, 1900	Mary Marshall	14	7	5	Daughter of Jerry & Arvilla Marshall
June 2, 1900	A.H. Beckwith	76			
May 19, 1900					Infant child of Jehue Grey
Nov. 2, 1900	Syrus Reid	20			Son of C.S. Reid
Jan. 1, 1891	Elizabeth Ringer	17	9		Sister of Mrs. William Sharman
Nov. 4, 1900	Hannah Sharman	36	10	2	Wife of Wm. Sharman
Nov. 19, 1900	Sarah M. Graves	38			Wife of Wm. Graves
Feb. 2, 1901	Henry W. Heule		2	8	Son of Wm. Heule
Mar. 11, 1901	Lula Arvilla Plumtree		6		
Mar. 22, 1901	C.S. Barhite	67			Husband of C.M. Barhite
Mar. 16, 1901	C.D. Ostrander	54			
Aug. 19, 1901	Walter Sharman	27	4	6	Son of Thomas & Mary A. Sharman
Oct. 5, 1901	George C. Hawthorne	81	2	1	Husband of Catherine Hawthorne
Nov. 7, 1901	Peter Vanderhalf	48	9		Husband of Minnie Vanderhalf
Apr. 2, 1893	Lester D. Ginn		3	25	Son of J.L. & R.E. Ginn
Oct. 28, 1894	Mary Sharman	53	6		Wife of Thomas S. Sharman
Dec. 19, 1901	Horace Allen	84	6	2	Father of Mrs. George Skutt
Feb. 18, 1902	Jane York				Wife of Charles York
July 2, 1902	Henry Noble	49			Husband of N.A. Noble
Apr. 9, 1903	Clyde H. McClintic	1		15	Child of Mr. & Mrs. Walter McClintic
Aug. 15, 1903	Maria Louisa Larson	44			Wife of J.P. Larson
Feb. 21, 1904	Mrs. Rebecca Ginn	48	10	15	Wife of J.L. Ginn
Feb. 27, 1904	Mrs. Catrina Kohl	69	11	3	Mother of John and F. Kohl
Apr. 10, 1904					Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. John Schlett
Oct. 28, 1904				2	Son of Cyrus E. & L. Norris
Feb. 23, 1905				2	Child of John & Maggie Lane
Mar. 9, 1905					Samuel Gilbert removed to town
Mar. 20, 1905	Franklin Sweet				Husband of Mrs. Elizabeth Sweet
Apr. 1905					Child of Mr. & Mrs. John Schlitt
Oct. 10, 1905	Anna Homan	4	3	28	Daughter of Gus Homan
	G.W. Yeoman				Husband of Mrs. M.N. Yeoman
May 1, 1906	Thomas D. Inks	50		5	Brother of Lloyd Inks
Apr. 10, 1904	Elma Dean Schlitt			21	Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Schlitt
May 17, 1906	Alfred Thomas	83			Husband of Mrs. A. Th mas
Apr. 25, 1906	Wanda Boughner	9	9	5	Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harry Boughner
Sept. 14, 1906	C. A. Noble				Father of Henry Noble
May 2, 1907	Lucy Fern Sweet		11		Daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Sweet
Dec. 4, 1906	Matilda Inks	94	8	11	Mother of Lloyd Inks
Jan. 26, 1908					Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Hawthorne

Aug. 13, 1907	Maria Lousia Larson	44	3	1	Wife of J. P. Larson
Oct. 20, 1908	Mr. W. C. Hawthorne	41	5	7	Husband of Mrs. Flossie Hawthorne
May 9, 1910				3	Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. W. Rose
Aug. 20, 1910	Hattie Morse	71			Wife of John Morse
Jan. 22, 1911	Alta Morse	61			Wife of Marinus Morse
June 22, 1					
11	Alfred E. Sweet	11	9	23	Son of Mr. & Mrs. Alfred G. Sweet
Apr. 22, 1907					Son of Mr. & Mrs. G. R. Thompson
Dec. 3, 1911	Walter Sharman	1	2		
Mar. 29, 1909					Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Hawthorne
June 7, 1912					Infant child of Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Honey
Feb. 24, 1913	John Morse	82			
Mar. 17, 1913	Chester Gray		7	19	Son of Jehue Gray
April 13, 1913	Johanna V.				
Jan. 5, 1914	James V.				
Mar. 1914	Elizabeth Cleveland	74			
Dec., 1914	McClintic				
Dec., 1914	Winters				
May 31, 1915	Mollie M. McClintic				
Jan. 25, 1917	Betsy Jane Noble	86			
Feb. 21, 1917	Marinus Morse	75	1	26	
May 6, 1919	Jesse McClintic				Son of John McClintic
June 25, 1919	Thomas Gannon	94			Died of heart failure
Dec. 11, 1919	John McClintic				Died of cancer of the liver
May, 1925	Thomas Sharman	82			Father of Mrs. A. G. Sweet
Apr. 15, 1926					Infant daughter of Mr. & Mrs. George Graves
Aug. 9, 1939	Nellie A. Noble	79	8		Wife of Henry C. Noble
Sept. 5, 1941	Mary Etta Lewis McClintic				
		65	5		Wife of Walter McClintic
May 19, 1944	Wilhelmina Vanderhalf				Mother of Maud Pollard

The first Clarks Public School building in the early 1890's. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

Chapter 5

Clarks Schools, Past and Present

HISTORY OF CLARKS PUBLIC SCHOOL

The first school in Clarks was established about 1870. It was a one-room frame structure located south of the Union Pacific tracks. In this school a sixth grade education could be obtained. Some of the early teachers in this school were Kirk Whited, A. G. Sherwood, S. E. Starrett, and Dr. Robinson. When Dr. Robinson was called away on a case he left one of his older scholars in charge of the class. In 1881 a second school was erected at the site of the later opera house. It was

Clarks Public School shown in the late 1890's. This building was erected in 1888. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

a two-story frame building which soon housed over eighty pupils. The old school was moved in the spring of 1884 to the south 24 foot of Lot 1 Block 1 original town of Clarks. It faced east on Green Street. It was moved there by George Foster and used by him for a grocery store. Later Green and Hoffman used the building as a

Clarks Public School, circa 1903. Lower grade room students. Their classroom was located at the back door of the brick school. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

hardware store — E. Brindle worked with them for a while. O. H. Castle bought out Green and later Hoffman. Mr. Patterson, father of Clay Patterson had a store there. Later Ed Johnson came to Clarks and started his hardware store in the building. The old school building's last occupant was a Mr. Mathews who used it as a furniture store. He was later charged with "setting it afire" allegedly for the insurance.

Teachers maintained a strict discipline, even whispering was punished. When punishment was due the guilty one was laid over a banister and flogged. An eighth grade education could be obtained in this school. In 1885 a principal was hired. The school was then extended to the tenth grade which was the beginning of Clarks High School. The first graduating class of Clarks High School was in 1887. W. A. Higgins and Bernice Burchs were the first graduates. The first elected school board (in 1887) of Clarks Public Schools consisted of W. R. Morse, Wm. McLean, and E. A. Richardson.

In 1888 a third school house was built. The present school gym and elementary school now occupy the spot. This building was two-story brick with eight rooms. In 1892 Nellie Baird became the first graduate of Clarks High School to return as a teacher there. In

1893 Mrs. C. L. Mitchell became the first woman member of the school board. The Class of 1897 graduated in the Opera House and consisted of seven graduates: George F. Rose, Marion Richardson, Walter Bittinger, Bertha Bower, Eldora Davis, Cecil Lyons and Hazetta Spelman. Class valedictorian was George Rose. Class motto was "Honors Await at Industry's Gate." In 1901 the Clarks Public School became an accredited 12-grade institution. Baseball and track were offered as the first sports in 1900. The first Alumni Banquet was held in 1903 with Miss Marian Richardson '97 as President. In 1905 Clarks had its first football team. In 1958 a new gymnasium and elementary classrooms were built. In 1972 another new building housing more elementary grades was completed.

The present population of Clarks Elementary and Junior-Senior High School is 264 students for the 1975-76 school year. In the three graduating classes this year, there were twenty-three seniors, nineteen eighth graders and twelve kindergarteners. As usual there were many honors bestowed upon members of all three classes. In sports Clarks has enjoyed some remarkable successes. In wrestling they were conference champs the last four years and district winners the last three years. In basketball in 1974-75, the Clarks team won their conference for the first time ever and went on to win the district tournament, but were foiled in their first regional game. The conference was won again in 1975-76 by the Clarks football team.

On May 30, 1976, the 42nd annual Alumni Banquet was held at Clarks High School. 1976 officers are: President Randy Dexter, First Vice-President Larry Phelps, Second Vice-President Monte Williams, Secretary-Treasurer Mary (Kluck) Pollard.

Building pictured was torn down in 1917 and another school was built. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

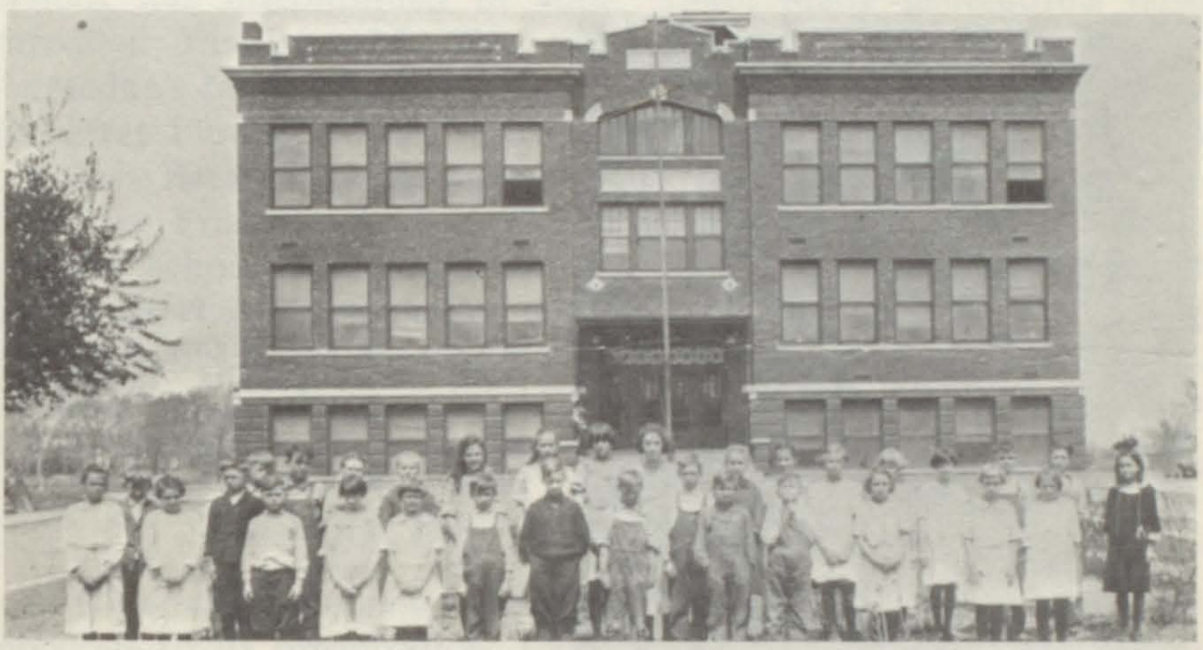
Graduating class, Clarks Public School, 1903. Top row: Austin Richardson, Joe Feehan, Meta Kokjer Key, Roy Kokjer, Mark Sears. Bottom row: Principal T. C. Somerville, Fannie Bird Bittinger, Alma Westgate Sears, Principal J. G. Mote. Absent: Grover Bailey.

Clarks High School class, 1890. Sitting, left to right: Ida Anderson (Graves), Mattie Pierson, Sybil Guthery, Meta Kokjer (Key), Chester Robinson, Otis Mason, Orlie Lamb, Del Lyon. Standing: Nell Doge, Bess Mitchell, unknown, Bertha Baird (teacher), Nellie Baird, Margaret Sears, Frances Brown, Edna Bates. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

Clarks High School basketball team, 1907. Pictured left to right: Vincent Douglas, Percy , Miner Whaley, Hans Kokjer, Raymond Douglas, Hezzie Pearson.

Clarks School football team, 1938. Top row: Andy Madison, Wallace Strasberg, Delbert Booth, Jr. Mustard, Walter Cremeen, Burdette Church, Hal Stumpff. Middle row: Coach Chatfield, Gerald Gates, Eugene Hunt, Don Rice, Don Dexter, Don Douglas, Ernest Wagner, Mike Shonsey, Don Booth. Bottom row: Kenneth Zerman, Wesley Land, Ralph Cook, Harry Getchel, Ray Cook, Vinson Bittinger, Leonard Setger, Donald Mustard.

Main entrance to Clarks Public School.



4th and 5th grades, Clarks Public School, 1921-1922. Standing in front of the flag pole is teacher Ellen (Sweet) Sloan. The space in the center of the driveway was planted in flowers. Some students pictured started school in the old school building before this one was built. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

SCHOOL DISTRICT #15, Merrick County

This school formerly known as Woods School and now known as Pleasant Hill is located three miles west and three miles north of the north edge of Clarks. It was formed November 1, 1871. There were eighteen children attending from the families of Balcom,

Pleasant Hill High School Class seen on September 22, 1921. Left to right, top and bottom rows: Ed Cerney, Elva Hansen, Clifford Goerl, Caroline Schultz, Lillie Wallace (teacher), Edna Huff, Marie Booth, Francis Huff, Stella Booth, Leah McCoy, Ruth Philbrook, Claire McCoy, Ernest Cosner, Henry Schultz, Loren Bellin, Wilbur Rose.

Young people at Pleasant Hill School. Left to right: Maynard Huff, Frank Schultz, Raymond McCoy, Edwin Pierce. Alnetta Burger, LaVeta McLean, Lola Beck, Barbara Starostka.

Pleasant Hill School District 15 students attending in January, 1927. Pictured are teachers Gladys and Violet Pierson and Mrs. Nona Little

Clayton, Shively, Stovin and Woods. The first school board members were J. W. Lumadue, Anthony Stovin and Zenus Woods. The first structure was a one-room building.

In 1916 a two-room structure was built. The north room was used for elementary and the south one for high school. Correspondence courses were taken by high school students along with their daily lessons to obtain all the courses they needed. Since many of the students rode horses to school in 1924, a barn was built to accommodate twelve head of horses. In 1926 three teachers were hired and that year a full basement was created. Neighboring country districts sent pupils to this school for high school. Ninth and tenth grades were held every year. In 1932 the twelvth grade was held. Harold Beck and Clifford Reed graduated. The rest of the class finished in Clarks that year. In 1933 eleventh grade was held. A stage in the south room is still used for Christmas programs. The high school was discontinued in June, 1945. Many generations have attended District #15. Two sets of four generations of John Lumadue's family have attended; all of his children including Annie Margaret Lumadue Beck, Walter L. Beck, Billy Beck, LeAnne and Stephen Beck, Julia Lumadue Williams, Darwin Williams, Marlene Williams Friedricksen and Debra and Donna Friedricksen. The present school board members are Philip Foulk, Dick Evers and Richard Friedricksen. At present there are fifteen students attending this school from the following families: Beck, Evers, Foulk, Friedricksen, Fritz, Helgoth, Phelps, Truesdell and Wemhoff. The teacher is Mrs. Rebecca Boelts of Archer, Nebraska.

SCHOOL DISTRICT #7, Merrick County

This school district was organized on March 5, 1873. Two years previous to its organization, Calvin Blanchard Hartwell deeded one acre of land on his farm for a school which was then known as the Hartwell school. A school census taken in April, 1875, by Samuel Batty, school board director, listed twenty-two children of school

age (5 years-21 years). Families that were listed were Batty, William Brunk, G. A. Noble, B. M. Cleveland, C. B. Hartwell, Eldridge Campbell and John Higgins. In 1877 the Albert Daniels, Marinus Morses and Francis Coyle families were added. Later other families entered the district, namely: John McClintic, Guilford Bice, Jason Davis, L. Welton, F. Tague, C. Brown, S. Martin, O. McDermott, A. Cosner, William Kuhn, A. Tague, H. Mackridge, Bowers, J. H. Morgan, M. E. Kellogg, James Dykeman, F. Carpenter, Wm. Henderson, M. N. Bump, H. L. Lane, A. E. Hartwell and John Cole. In 1894 the John Kohl, L. Pierce and George Cowgill families came to District 7. In 1895 Daniel Tobias, John Kelly families attended followed by Drew Chesley, G. Campbell, Henry Daniels, James Good and Frank Osterman. In 1898 the Henry Dittmer family was added and in 1900 Ed Campbell, F. Gates and F. Raynor. In 1902 B. Waggoner, 1903 J. Boice, W. Morgan, 1904 G. Key. They were the families listed in the census book as having children of school age.

Teachers were contracted to teach the Spring term from the first week in May to July 1. One month was allotted for vacation. The fall term was September and October with a month's vacation through November. The winter term consisted of four months from December through March. Spring vacation was April.

In 1889, Kate Dodge taught six months receiving $30 per month. In 1890-1891 school was held for nine months from September through May. During the next five years the school again reverted to three terms. In 1900 school was again held for nine consecutive months. For many years the teachers had to wait as long as three months to be paid. During the earliest years tax money was

Students attending School District 7 during 1915-1916. Top row: Walter Dittmer, Harry Tague, Ed Dittmer, Marie Koch, Clara Koch, Vera Shoemaker, Minnie Dittmer, Lydia Dittmer, Martha Dittmer. Middle row: Hugh Holm, Peter Koch, Elmer Dittmer, Raymond Dittmer, Walter Kohl, Carl Holm, Emma Kohl, Hilda Koch, Margaret Kohl and teacher Fern Brown. Bottom row: Mary Kohl, Bettie Kohl, Margaret Holm, Martha Kohl, Minnie Haman.

difficult to collect and it was sometimes necessary for the district to borrow money or issue bonds to pay their salaries. Three mills were levied for the salaries and one mill for expenditures. Later the taxes were raised. School was held in the same building during all the years District 7 existed. In 1886, a stone foundation was placed under the schoolhouse. In 1890 a hard, pine floor was laid and the inside schoolhouse walls were plastered and painted. A platform was also built in front of the building. A flag pole was erected in 1892. During 1900 a cyclone cellar was built and a barn was erected to replace the hitching posts. William Kohl was elected director of the school board in 1906 and a large school bell was also purchased and installed. During the years three generations of several families attended District #7. The district was dissolved on February 20, 1956, and it was annexed to District II and became a part of the Clarks Public School presently being used as the Clarks Nursery School.

The records of the teachers who taught at this school from 1872-1886 are unavailable. Below is a list of those who taught from 1886-1956:

1886	Annie Peoples	1913-1915	Hattie Reeves
1887	Annie Peoples	1915-1917	Ferne Brown
1888	Annie Peoples	1917-1920	Edna Woodhouse
1888	Emma Niblack	1920-1922	Margaret Boelts
1888	Kate Dodge	1922-1924	Helen Campbell
1888	Louie Pratt	1924-1925	Paul Keller
1889	Kate Dodge	1925-1927	Marie Becker
1890-1891	William Higgins	1927-1929	Florence Sampson
1891-1892	Ralph Beardsley, Wm. Higgins	1929-1931	Erma Wilson
1892-1893	Maude Stern	1931-1933	Ethel Sweet
1893-1894	Lucy Batty	1933-1935	Barbara Little
1894-1895	Edith Dunlap, Wm. Higgins	1935-1936	Ester Pennington
1895-1897	Connie Yarmon	1936-1938	Hazel Norris
1897-1898	Ed Evans, W. A. Higgins	1938-1939	Erma Wilson
1898-1899	W. A. Higgins	1939-1940	Mary Didier
1899-1900	Lottie Lee, Flora Baird	1940-1942	Adeline Leith
1900-1901	Flora Baird	1942-1944	Rita Goerl
1901-1902	W. A. Higgins	1944-1945	Alice Anderson
1902-1903	Jennie Dexter	1945-1949	Lois Steger
1903-1904	Bertha Ward	1949-1950	La Rhue Johnson
1904-1905	Margaret Brokman	1950-1951	Barbara Beck
1905-1906	Mae Little	1951-1953	Cecile Badje
1906-1908	Stena Hipke	1953-1954	Rosaline Swedenburg

1908-1910	May Campbell	1954-1955	Gene Markworth
1910-1911	Bertha Rodewald	1955-1956	Lois Randall
1911-1913	Grace Brokman		

CLARKS NURSERY SCHOOL

In 1965 Mrs. Clark (Peggy) Caley, a professional teacher, and Mrs. Jack (Marilyn) Wilson, organized and started the first Clarks Nursery School. They held classes twice each week in the basement of the Methodist Church. Their first class consisted of eight children and attendance at the school was without charge. Classes later totaled twelve preschoolers. Under their direction the school continued for two years.

In 1967 Mrs. Philip (Daphne) Kufeldt taught classes for a brief time in the Clarks Lions Club building. She was the first to teach in the building presently used by the nursery school. Her classes averaged fifteen children and reached an enrollment of nineteen. She worked in association with Mrs. Brazda to help the children prepare for kindergarten. Daphne ended her association with the school in 1971 and presently is a teacher-aide for the mentally handicapped children's program in Aurora, Nebraska.

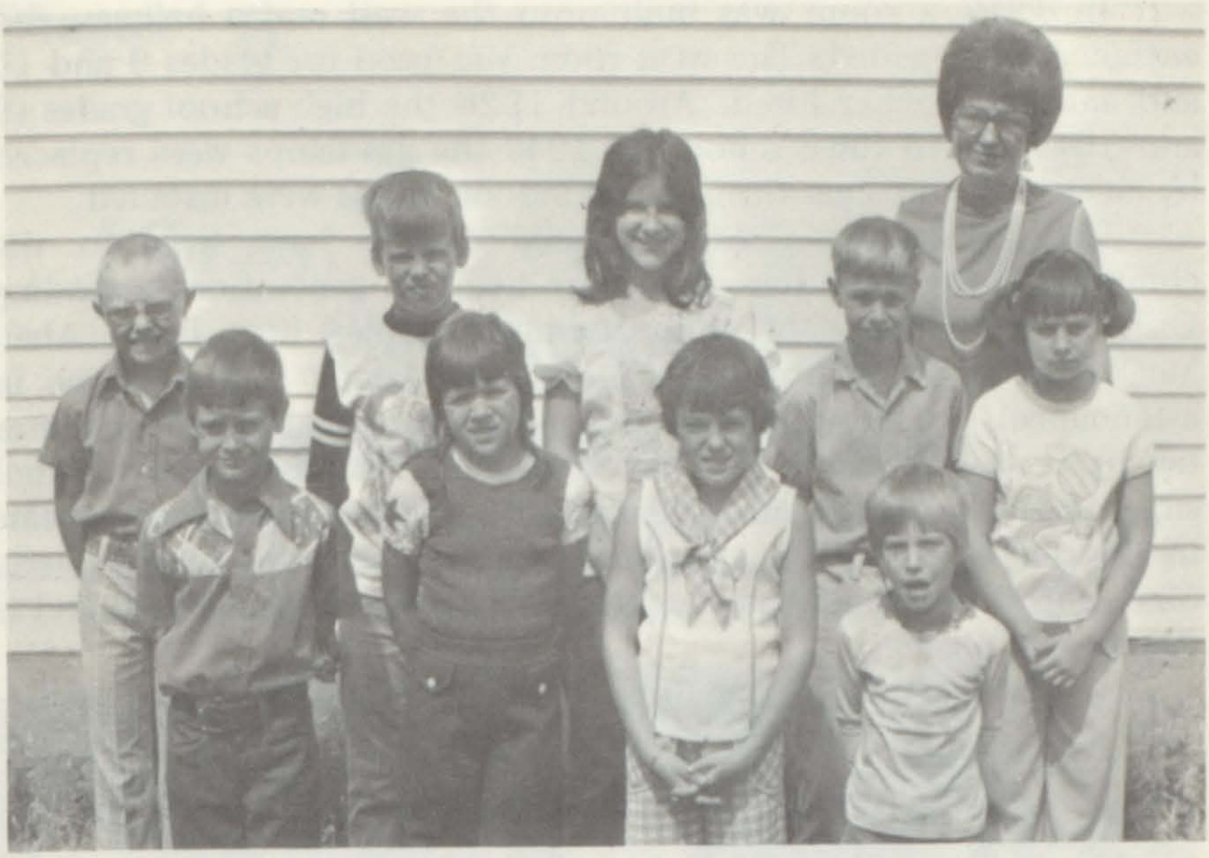
In 1971 Mrs. James (Judy) Helgoth and Mrs. Dwight (Lynda) Strobel saw the need for the continuation of nursery school. Under their leadership, Mrs. Wayne Burbank and Sherri Kelly were engaged as teachers. Classes were held in the Clarks Public Library basement and continued for one year.

The present teachers in the Clarks Nursery school are Mrs. Burdette Church and Mrs. Walter D. Beck. Classes are held in the old District #7 schoolhouse located behind the present Clarks Public School building. The preschoolers meet twice each week from September through April. Since 1972 class attendance had averaged thirteen children each year. Tuition is now $16 per month.

SCHOOL DISTRICT #50

In 1893, one quarter section of land in Section 18-14-5, now in Central Township, was homesteaded by James D. Daniels. This land is now owned by Walter Scholz. On January 7, 1901, one-acre was sold to School District #5 for the purpose of building a schoolhouse. The school was built by a Dexter who resided on the edge of Clarks. His daughter, Jennie, was the first teacher in the school. She was followed by Lillie Phelps. The school was a typical one-room building.

Some of the early school board members were: George Armstrong, Sam Wilson, and John Sims. The first families attending school were the Hugh Campbells, John Sims, August Butt, Ernest



1975-1976 school students at District #50. Rodney Richards, Jerry Sundberg, Diane Dubas, James Schmidt, teacher Mrs. Dorothy Glasser, Christine Hannappel. Nick Hannappel, Nancy Dubas, Lorie Hannappel, Rob Osantowski. Not pictured: Michelle and Jerry Paul Kreps.

Persons, Henry Sims, Sam Wilson, Dave Tobias, Farnum VanBeck, Turner Abel, Clyde Custards, Emil Hamilton and a Cook family, all of whom had several children in school. Several families had bought their land at auction from the T. B. Hord Co.

On November 19, 1913, District #5 was signed over to District #50 and the old building was sold and a new one built. Thirty-three children attended school at that time. The new school was designed according to recommendations that light should come over the left shoulder, so windows were placed on the south, equipped with adjustable shades, top and bottom and a jacketed furnace installed.

Bicentennial photo of School District #50.

In 1917 a room was built onto the west and a hallway and entrance were added. The west room was used for grades 9 and 10 and another teacher hired. Around 1926 the high school grades (9 and 10) went to town school. In 1947 the gas lamps were replaced by electricity and a gas furnace and indoor toilets were installed.

There have been several families who have lived in the community for sometime, who have had two generations attending District #50. Some of these families' names are: Butt, Abel, McConnell and Richards. The McConnell family had someone in attendance for forty-one years. One of the former students who later taught in this school is Dr. Melvin Zichek, a minister and a school superintendent. Mrs. Rose Anderson of rural Polk taught seven years in District #50 which is the longest any teacher has taught there. Mrs. Dorothy Glasser has taught for five years in the school and is the present teacher.

Students attending District 61 School, 5 miles northeast of Clarks. Lesta Mace was school teacher.

District 16 School students. These children were the last class before the school finally closed its doors. Photo taken in October, 1942 by their teacher, Miss Lela Vincent (Mrs. Burdette Church). Top row: Jeanette Kaminsky, 8th grade; Lucile Freeland, 6th grade; Julia Yrkoski, 8th grade. Bottom row: Doris Ann Freeland, 3rd grade; Kenneth Freeland, 4th grade.

Recess at District 25 School, 3 miles west of Clarks.

Chapter 6

Library, Post Office, Rescue Unit, Club Organizations

CLARKS TOWNSHIP PUBLIC LIBRARY

Prior to 1917 the only lending library in Clarks was in the public school. It was housed in the belltower where books could be checked out on Friday afternoons. In March of that year a

Clarks Public Library entrance

movement was started to apply to the Carnegie Foundation in New York City for a grant to build a public library. Soon afterwards the application was granted. It was the last grant given as the practice was discontinued due to World War I. The township board levied a tax of two mills on the dollar to comply with the agreement that the township would maintain the library after it was built. In 1918 the library board purchased the Odd Fellows Hall and lot for $1500. There is no record of a formal dedication but one was held. Harriett Morse Little was elected librarian in July, 1918, at a salary of $50. She resigned in 1920 and Mrs. Fern Beardsley was elected and served until 1923. Mrs. Mae Gray served until 1925 followed by Miss Bess McLean. In February, 1930, the board elected Cleo Schank librarian. In the early days the basement was used for band practice and

various meetings. At present the library is under the supervision and jurisdiction of the Nebraska Public Library Commission in Lincoln whose regional coordinator is in Hastings, Nebraska. He visits at least once a year and collects data for a yearly report on circulation and expenses. The total number of volumes is 7,800 and includes some 400 paperback books donated by the Hartwell family of Omaha. Miss Gladys Hartwell sends many gift books to our library and dedicates them to her parents the Amos E. Hartwells. The memorial shelf collection of books is kept in a glass enclosed bookcase donated by Miss Lelia Moorman and the framed picture of George Washington was a gift from the Clarks Woman's Club. The children's reading table was donated by the family of Mrs. Fannie Bittinger and the bulletin board was a gift from the Clarks T.O.P.S. Club. Another gift was a set of illustrated encyclopedias donated by Mrs. Violet Terry in memory of her husband.

The library is open daily except Sundays and holidays from 2-5 p.m., 7-8:30 p.m., in addition to Saturday mornings, 10 a.m.-noon. During the recent energy and fuel crisis it was not open evenings. As our librarian, Mrs. Schank, says, "We can't promise to always find the answers, but we will promise to try." The present members of the library board are Mrs. Frank Schuldt, Mrs. George Sweet, Mrs. Art Schlondorf, Miss Annie Feehan and Robert Lindahl.

CLARKSVILLE POST OFFICE

This post office was established in 1869, and its name later changed to the Clarks Post Office. The first postmaster was Mr. Kerr. Others were Robert Douglas, Bess Elizabeth McLean, George Beardsley, George L. Jordan, and Donald B. Douglas.

Rural free delivery was started in 1900 with four routes originating from town. The rural carriers in 1912 were Wm. Alberton, Archie Stearns, Frank Noble, and Dave Wilson. Some faithful carriers over the years have been Edwin Brown, Andrew Christensen, Asa Pollard, Leslie Kohlhof and still serving as substitute, F. P. Bender. The Clarks rural area is presently served by two routes with Robert Betts and Lyle Nedrig as carriers. Throughout the years the location of the post office has changed many times. Its present location is on the east side of downtown Clarks in a building owned by the Clarks Lions Club. The Clarks post office serves a town and rural population area of about 1,200 and is presently managed by postmistress, Mrs. Zola R. Rieken.

CLARKS EMERGENCY SERVICES (RESCUE) UNIT

In the late 1950's people in the community realized the need for a vehicle to transport sick or injured citizens. At that time a patient sometimes had to wait as long as one hour for an ambulance

to arrive. The ambulance service was then provided by a funeral home which had the only vehicle that would accommodate stretcher patients.

Several years later in the spring of 1967, several businessmen in Clarks donated money towards the purchase of an ambulance. Lists of pledges were organized in two places of business. The Clarks Rural Fire Board consisting of Art Miller, Don Grafe, Francis Brannan, Ted Ksiazek, and Paul Tyler agreed to purchase the vehicle. The City Board provided the equipment and supplied the manpower. Dr. R. R. Douglas was instrumental in purchasing the necessary items. He contacted Joe McKown of Columbus and Mr. McKown donated an ambulance cot and sold the Clarks men oxygen equipment at one-half his cost. Mr. Byers of Central City donated a second cot. The vehicle was a Chevrolet sportvan with extra length body. The unit is equipped with a resuscitator, splints, suction machine, and childbirth equipment. New materials are being added to the units supplies such as a positive pressure resuscitator, Hare traction splint for hip fractures, and backboards for neck and back injuries. 337 people have been cared for and transported to hospitals during the period June, 1967, to June, 1976.

Summer, 1976, view of Rescue Unit and director George Sweet.

The director of the Clarks Rescue Unit is George Sweet, State Instructor of Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance Training. He is assisted on emergency calls by Michael Bittinger, E.M.T., and Elmer Miller, E.M.T. The Clarks community is fortunate to have other technicians, both men and women available in time of need. The rescue service is provided free and has transported patients to various hospitals in Omaha, Lincoln, Columbus, Genoa, Osceola, Fullerton, Hastings, Central City, Aurora, Grand Island, Holdrege, Norfolk, and York, Nebraska.

CLUB ORGANIZATIONS

SOLAR LODGE NO. 134 A.F. & A.M.

An order of dispensation to form a lodge was granted by the Grand Lodge of Nebraska on August 8, 1884, and on June 24, 1885, Solar Lodge No. 134 was chartered. The present membership is fifty-five. In a financial way the lodge has always prospered and

during the years of 1864-96 it helped many of its brothers in distress to tide them over till better times came.

In 1903, the lodge joined with M. H. Whaley in the building of a two-story brick building on the corner of Green and Amity Streets. The lodge owns the upper part of the building and is used entirely for the lodge except for the Eastern Star which is composed of Masons and women relatives. The cost of the lodge and its furnishings was $2,500.

Solar Lodge No. 134 meets once a month in regular session, having special sessions of work as may be required. In the 91 years of its existence, peace and harmony has always prevailed and the record of the lodge is one that its members can be proud of. The present Master is Howard Fairbairn.

IVY CHAPTER #210

In 1887, the first Eastern Star Chapter was organized in Clarks and called Ivy Chapter #29. The chapter was discontinued as all of their records were destroyed by fire. On November 15, 1907, several who had been members of that chapter gathered in the Masonic Hall to form another chapter. Dr. and Mrs. Anna B. Fox from a Michigan Chapter also attended. On June 4, 1908, Hattie M. Scott of Stromsburg, as Deputy Grand Matron, constituted the chapter and installed the officers. Meetings were held Friday on or before the full moon as those were the horse and buggy days and travel was best at that time. At present, the chapter meets on the third Monday. In

Past Matrons, Eastern Star

1918 Lon Thomas was installed as Worthy Patron and served until 1926. He initiated fifty-three candidates during his term. Officers were Celia Trullinger, Treasurer for nineteen years; Ida Graves, Treasurer for twelve years; and Maude Brown, Warder for twelve years; Ruth Schuldt had been Secretary since 1943 with the exception of one year and still holds that position in 1976.

In 1908, the chapter purchased their first musical instrument, an Estey organ for $20. A piano was bought in 1934 for $70. The Manual Training class of the Clarks High School made a bench out of the old organ for use with the piano. In the early days members were entertained in each other's homes after chapter for a social hour and refreshments. On the night of May 12, 1916, members went to the home of W. R. Morse (the present Gerber home) and discovered the house was on fire. The small twins of Harriette Little were asleep in an upstairs room and were rescued by Elizabeth McLean and Harriette. The house burned to the ground.

The Eastern Star and Past Matrons Club have worked with the Masons and assisted financially with improvements in the Masonic Hall and Recreation Room. The clubs equipped the small room on the north of the building and decorated it. The Masonic Hall Chapter Room also has been redecorated. The Chapter Room also has an electric organ and the new electric signet was installed in 1950. The chapter has helped with the Masonic Home at Plattsmouth and the Children's Home in Fremont by sending gifts or money each year. The members donate to Shriner's Hospital for crippled children, the Masonic Home Building Fund, and are credited 100% on International Temple Fund.

The chapter has been honored by having members appointed to serve in the state. Ruth Schuldt was Grand Representative of the state of Ohio in Nebraska, Edith Abel was Grand Guardian of Jobs Daughters, Mary McLean was a page at Grand Chapter, Selma Ferguson also a page at Grand Chapter, Verna Schlondorf was Grand Representative of the State of Oklahoma in Nebraska and LeRoy Dexter a teller at Grand Chapter.

In August, 1944, Winifred Adelson and Selma Buss organized the Past Matrons Club. In 1975 Mrs. Marland (Gae) Beckstrom was appointed Grand Adah of the Grand Chapter. A reception in her honor was at the Beck's Ole Barn in November.

RESEARCH CLUB

On November 29, 1898, a society meeting was held with Mrs. Westgate and much interest was shown in reading poems by various authors. It was proposed to form a club which should be more strictly literary — with the aims of mutual, mental improvement, research and pleasure. At a meeting with Mrs. Mitchell on December

8, 1898, the project took shape and the ladies agreed upon a proposition made by Mrs. Dodge. The club name was to be "Edelesin." A motto suggested by the President, Mrs. Chamberlain, and written by Lowell was adopted. It was as follows, "be noble and the nobleness which lies sleeping but never dead in other men shall use in majesty to meet thine own." The floral emblem was the pansy. The appearance in color "purple being akin to royalty" and its true nobleness of the club motto. The color gold was added as a symbol also and the colors of purple and gold were decided upon.

On May 23, 1918, the constitution of the club was amended and the name changed to the Research Club. At the present time the membership is sixteen with Mrs. Meta Key, the eldest member. The club meets the second Thursday of the month with no meetings in June, July and August. Officers for 1976-77 are President Mrs. Frank Betts, Vice President Mrs. Art Miller, Secretary Mrs. Henry Schlondorf, Treasurer Mrs. Frank Schuldt, Book Committee — Mrs. Linord Johnson, Mrs. Art Schlondorf and Mrs. Voilet Terry. Research Club's current programs are in keeping with the Bicentennial theme. The members are active in community affairs and support various activities and undertakings with contributions.

PLATTE VALLEY LODGE #277

This club was instituted in Clarks in 1903. In 1912 they had a membership of ninety-four and were very active until 1950 when the membership began to diminish. In late 1953 members deemed it best to consolidate with Merrick Odd Fellows Lodge No. 73 in Central City. The Rebekahs followed suit consolidating with Colfax Rebekah Lodge No. 25 in Central City.

CLARKS LIONS CLUB

In the spring of 1942, a representative of the Columbus Lions Club came to Clarks to help those interested in organizing a Clarks Club. A meeting was held in the Methodist Church and seventeen charter members were present on June 3, 1942. Of the original charter members only one living member remains, namely Frank Schuldt of Clarks. Present membership numbers twenty-five. Membership throughout the years has been as high as forty-five. The new club held their meetings at a cafe in Clarks which is now the site of the new Town Hall. Through membership donations the Lions Club purchased the building where the Post Office now stands. The north section of the building is the club room and the south side is rented to the postal department.

The club is well known for their charitable works and has long been active in community affairs. They have donated to the Nebraska Eye Institute in Omaha and the club also furnishes

eyeglasses to needy persons and white canes and reading lamps. They assist the Boy Scouts organization, donate to baseball teams and make their club room available for social gatherings. In April, 1972, the club celebrated its 30th Anniversary and a special guest was James Mayo of Broken Bow, District Governor of Lions International. In past years the members honored Dr. Robert Douglas and Dr. Shaw Little for their years of service to the community.

The Lions Auxiliary entertain the members with a program, social hour and lunch served on the second Thursday of each month. Currently the members gather for a covered dish supper and social hour once a month. The club meets on the fourth Thursday of each month. Mrs. JoAnn Foulk is the current Auxiliary President.

V.F.W. POST 4832

This club is a service organization and has donated money and equipment to school projects, community events and national affairs. A supply of wheelchairs and crutches are always available to those in need. The first meeting place of the club was the Union Pacific Depot. Later, the members purchased the Pollard Hardware Store and remodeled it and added a kitchen and dance floor. The V.F.W. Post 4832 was chartered in December, 1958, with forty-six charter members. The first officers were: Commander Bill Douglas, Treasurer Gil Bolen, Secretary Vinson Bittinger, and Service Officer Don Douglas. In 1972, the Club purchased the old Miller Theater and remodeled it, doubling its size. In 1976, the Club has 157 members, forty of which are life members.

The Auxiliary Post was organized on February 18, 1959, with twenty-five charter women members. They are engaged in various projects and in the past were involved in fund-raising projects to remodel their club room. The ladies sponsored teen dances, donated to the blood bank, sponsored poppy sales, donated to Veteran's Home, National Home and Hospitals. They were active in purchasing playground equipment for the city park and donated flags and books to the Clarks school and library. The ladies also serve many dinners and receptions. The present membership is forty-six. The "Gold Star Mother" is Elsie Miller. The current officers are: President Mrs. Robert Starostka and Mrs. Greg Douglas, Secretary.

Chapter 7

Businesses (Those Contributing)

BANK OF CLARKS

The First National Bank of Clarks was established in 1889 by Walter Chamberlain. For forty years he was principal stockholder and managing officer. His eldest son, Edward, became first Vice-President and later cashier. Walter Jr. was cashier and managing officer of the State Bank of Havens which his father also established. Two young men who received their early bank training from Walter Chamberlain were Vincent Douglas, cashier, and Ed Kugel, assistant cashier. After the death of his wife in 1927, Mr. Chamberlain went to Seattle to reside with his son, Edward. He died in 1930 and his remains were brought back to Clarks to be interred.

On February 9, 1937, Governor Cochran signed Charter #1650, authorizing the Bank of Clarks to transact the business of a commercial bank in accordance with the provisions of the State of Nebraska Banking Code. The following were the first stockholders: Frank A. Adelson, John Adelson, O. H. Adelson, O. A. Bittinger, C. J. Dittmer, W. F. Feehan, B. H. Ferguson, Emil Hamilton, J. C. Inbody, Joseph Kiolbasa, W. G. Kohl, John L. Pollard, H. G. Wellensick, F. L. West, Wm. Williams, M. B. Douglas, and J. L. Douglas. At the first stockholders meeting the following officers were elected: F. L. West, President; W. H. Feehan, Vice-President; J. L. Pollard, Secretary; R. E. Slusser, Cashier; O. H. Adelson, Assistant Cashier; and H. G. Wellensick, Attorney. The Report of Condition on June 30, 1937, showed: Loans — $10,652.50, Individual Deposits — $46,000.47, and Capital — $10,000. The principal business was the purchasing of real estate — Farmer's National Bank building and repairs of its interior.

In 1937, Miss Roma Ruff was employed as bookkeeper and in 1942, Roma Ruff Pollard became Assistant Cashier. In 1943, Harriette Gates was elected bookkeeper. In 1943, W. G. Kohl was placed on the Board of Directors and in 1944, Joseph Kiolbasa was also a new Director. On April 14, 1944, the published statement of demand deposits liability was $212,750.94. At the director's meeting on September 2, 1944, a resolution of confidence and appreciation to Harriette E. Gates for efficient service at the bank with sincere regret in losing her from the staff, was offered and adopted. Gordon C. Bush replaced her as assistant cashier. Cleo Schank was hired as

clerk in 1946. In January, 1948, M. B. Douglas became a director and another director, Hubert Burruss in 1950. In May, 1950, Cliff E. Miller was made President of the bank and Harriette Gates again joined the staff as assistant cashier.

On July 27, 1950, Federal Deposit Insurance was granted to the bank and Capital Account was raised to $30,000. Plans were made to redecorate and modernize the bank building. In October, 1950, President Miller sold his stock to Leonard Selko. Vice-President, F. E. Slusser was given additional responsibility of cashier. In 1951, H. M. Burruss was elected President of the Board and C. E. Souser joined as Board Member. F. K. Betts became a member of the board in January, 1953, and Ann Selko was clerk.

In September, 1954, C. R. Caley purchased the Leonard Selko stock and took possession of the bank on October 1. At that time savings accounts were $10,650.15. Stockholders on January 1, 1955, were C. R. Caley, E. E. Caley, H. M. Burruss, M. B. Douglas, Joseph Kiolbasa, Dale Anderstrom, Frank Betts, and Dora Miller. Directors elected were: President Burruss, Vice-President and Cashier C. R. Caley, F. K. Betts, Mr. Douglas and Anderstrom.

The 20th Anniversary of the Bank of Clarks was celebrated on February 9, 1957, with an open house. Each new savings depositor was given $1 and a savings bond was given away. Guests were from correspondent and neighboring banks, as well as local residents and Mr. and Mrs. Wade Martin, former chief of the banking department. In June, 1960, M. B. Douglas died and Eva E. Caley was appointed as director. Lynda Clark was bank clerk from 1960-1963.

On December 12, 1961, C. R. Caley died at the bank of a coronary thrombosis. His wife, Eva E. Caley, applied to the State Banking Department for a license to operate the bank until her son, L. Clark Caley, arrived. He was cashier of the First National Bank of Alamosa, Colorado, at that time. L. Clark Caley took office as cashier on March 1, 1962. On January 9, 1962, bank officers were: President Burruss, Vice-President Eva E. Caley, Cashier and Secretary of the board, L. Clark Caley, Frank Betts and Dale Anderstrom. Total deposits were $838,405.53 and total loans and discounts were $607,012.22.

In August, 1963, Elva Church was hired. Sally Sweet worked from August, 1966, to the fall of 1967. Betty Cook was hired as part-time clerk in 1968 and then full-time clerk in 1969. President Burruss died in 1970. In January, 1971, L. Clark Caley was elected President, Eva E. Caley, Vice-President and Secretary of the Board, Harriette E. Gates, Cashier, Elva Church, Assistant Cashier and Betty Cook, Clerk. James Heins of Central City was employed from June, 1971, to December, 1974. He left the bank to assume his duties as elected Merrick County Treasurer.

The interior of the bank was completely redecorated and carpeted in 1973. In January, 1975, Arnetta Little was employed and Lynda Clark Strobel returned to part-time duty. Mr. Terry Connick of the Bank of Commerce started work in April, 1975. Harriette Gates, cashier, retired from the bank. She was honored at a buffet supper hosted by L. Clark and Eva E. Caley, who presented her with a wrist watch for her years of loyal service.

Bank President L. Clark Caley states, "It took thirty-three years for the Bank to obtain $2½ million in deposits. In the last five years that amount has doubled to total assets of $5 million. We are optimistic about the future of our business in Clarks as well as the future of the Clarks community. As an independent bank, locally owned and staffed, we again pledge to serve the farmers and business people of this area. We hope to be a part of the future success of our community."

1976

L. Clark Caley, President
Eva E. Caley, Vice-President
Elva Church, Cashier
Betty L. Cook, Assistant Cashier
Lynda Strobel
Arnetta Little
Terry M. Connick
F. K. Betts, Director

WILLIAM DOUGLAS AND COMPANY STORE

This store was started as General Merchandise in March, 1888, by William Douglas and E. Starrett in a building on Front Street. That same year the partners separated and Mr. Starrett operated a confectionary store.

In 1902, the present store building was purchased from Mr. Dixon and moved to its present location. In 1916, William Douglas Jr. joined his father in the business. In 1920, Basil Douglas returned from his homestead in Wyoming. He had previously served in France during World War I. William Douglas Jr. later accepted a mail carrier position in Newman Grove. Basil and his father operated the store until the death of William Douglas in 1930. Basil then operated the store alone. In 1942, the south building was purchased from William Higgins and was operated as a feed store. In 1946, William R. Douglas joined his father in the business. A year later the store was completely remodeled and the feed business discontinued. The building was later used as an insurance office for the Vincent Douglas Agency. In 1955, Basil Douglas retired and five years later William R. took over operation. He remodeled the store completely and

Inside view of Douglas' Store. Pictured is Mr. William Douglas.

installed a fresh Meat Department. In 1963, William R. (Bill) Douglas purchased the Snider Locker Plant and built on a slaughterhouse. In 1972, his sons Robert and Greg returned from military service and presently operate the locker and meat cutting business.

JIM'S BARBER SHOP

On May 23, 1867, in New York City the Union Pacific Railroad Board of Directors authorized Grenville W. Dodge, Chief Engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad, to lay out and locate towns along the railroad line. Mr. Dodge conveyed the property, where the barber shop now stands, to F. H. Barnes by Quit Claim deed on January 31, 1872, and by Warranty deed on January 2, 1877. On June 12, 1875, F. H. Barnes mortgaged the property with interest at the rate of 10% per annum. Listed among the owners were William and wife Mary Douglas who purchased the property April 12, 1895.

Early in the 1900's Ellsworth Davis operated the barber shop and on March 20, 1924, he purchased the property. Later Sylvester B. Whetstine (his son-in-law) lived in part of the building and operated the shop. In those days they also had showers in the back room for their customers.

Fred Gilliard was barber for years on the west side of the street. In May, 1945, Fred purchased the property and ran the barber shop until 1961. He was 81 years old when he retired. In 1961, Russell "Jim" Jacobi rented the building from Fred and continued the

barber business. On February 24, 1967, Jim purchased the shop from Fred Gilliard. In 1970, Jim remodeled the shop and is the present owner and manager. Fred Gilliard relates that this building has always been a barber shop.

J. H. POLLARD AND SONS STORE

In 1904, Mr. J. H. Pollard came to Clarks and opened an implement business in a new building he constructed on Front Street, west of the then John Roach Building. He had previously operated a flour mill and implement store in Silver Creek. In 1908, he built an addition to the north of his present business adjoining the cement block building and into this moved the implement business. In 1910, he built the home in Clarks now occupied by Mrs. Paul Bender. In this house he resided until his death on February 14, 1927. In 1913, he bought the West Livery Barn, remodeled it and used it as an implement storage building. In 1915, he purchased the old West Hotel on Front Street and tore it down. On its site, in the fall of 1917 and spring of 1918, was constructed the present filling station now known as the Pollard Oil Company. In 1918, Pollard and Sons moved from the Front Street to the Green Street building. During the summer of 1926 the highway (now known as Highway 30) was taken out of Clarks Village and moved across the Union Pacific tracks to run along the south edge of town. Concrete paving was moving westward and by this time had reached the stockyards at the eastern extremity of town. It continued to move westward and

Pollard Hardware Store

by 1930 had reached Central City. In 1926, J. H. Pollard retired from the hardware and implement business and devoted his attention to operating the oil station. His two sons, W. J. and J. L. then managed the business. During 1926 and 1927, he and Andrew Graves (who did the work) erected the concrete block building on Highway 30 to be used in the oil business. This was never finished by Mr.

Pollard Oil Company

Pollard. His death in February, 1927, ended that activity.

His two sons completed the work and operated the hardware, implement, and oil business together. A nephew, Haffner Pollard, was for a time associated with them in the oil business. In December, 1927, Miss Harriette Bush was hired at the implement store and continued her employment there for seventeen years. She presently resides in Clarks and is now Mrs. Amos Gates.

In 1930, W. J. and J. L. designed and built the filling station and tourist court on highway 30 which was operated by Phillips 66 Products. The two brothers, with a man named Ryan, conducted this as a three-way partnership for a time. Ultimately, the Pollards sold their interest in this enterprise to Ryan. In 1937, W. J. (William) and J. L. (called "Tug" by his friends) erected the filling station on highway 30 and leased it for ten years to Sinclair Oil Company. They continued the hardware and implement business until 1942 when William died and the partnership was dissolved. The oil business founded by J. H. Pollard was continued and is presently controlled by the Pollard men.

Pollard Oil Company as it looked when Asa A. Pollard took over ownership.

POLLARD OIL COMPANY

In March, 1938, Asa A. Pollard (grandson of J. H. Pollard) purchased the Pollard Oil Company from J. L. and W. J. Pollard. In 1943, Mrs. Asa A. Pollard joined the firm as bookkeeper and together Asa and Roma operated the business until January, 1973.

In March, 1946, they purchased the south station owned by J.

Asa Pollard and sons in 1963.

L. and W. J. who had leased it to Sinclair Oil. On the south and east of the station they built the Pollard Motel — the only modern motel between Columbus and Grand Island. At that time rooms were in great demand. In August, 1958, Asa Pollard, J. R. Brown and F. W. Schuldt built the Clarks Grain Storage. The large grain storage building was south of the railroad and the smaller storage was built on Pollard Oil Company land just north of the station. In 1950, Asa built a large, steel building east of the station office to be used for tire repair, grease jobs, etc., and storage. On July 3, 1961, open house was held in the new cement-block building that replaced the

old, wooden structure. On October 2, 1962, Asa went into the Propane business and erected storage tanks on his acreage north of Clarks. Later he purchased land in the north part of Fullerton, Nebraska, and placed propane storage tanks there also.

Due to declining health Asa and Roma sold the Pollard Oil and Propane Company to two of their sons, the present owners and managers — Asa Lloyd and Rod Pollard in January, 1973. Mrs. Asa A. Pollard sold the Pollard Motel and Station to Greg and Bob Douglas and Randy Dexter in April, 1975.

CLARKS TELEPHONE CO.

In 1905, the first telephones in Clarks were connected to a switchboard. This board was located one-half block north of the present bank. The owner and manager was Mr. Clarence Raisch, and one of the first operators was Pearl Bird Keefe.

Otis and Fannie Bittinger purchased the telephone company in 1908 from Mr. Raisch, and moved the switchboard to their home one-half block west of the bank where they operated the company for nearly forty years. Miss Mabel Bittinger, sister of Otis, was also one of the first full-time operators. The number of subscribers grew to almost four hundred before the nation-wide depression. During that time, subscribers dropped to over half.

In 1946, upon his arrival home from the army, the second generation, Vinson A. Bittinger took over ownership-management of the company. The telephone company was incorporated in 1957 and

Clarks Telephone Company switchboard and operator, L. Brown.

was to be called "The Clarks Telephone Co." Two years later the company converted to a dial system. The new switchboard was placed in a new building directly back of the Bittinger residence. One, two, and four party service was offered in town and eight party in the rural area. In later years, an improvement was made offering one party in town and four party in the country, with many miles of buried lines. Other modernizing factors have been direct distance dialing, mobile phones, and the pager system.

Vinson and Margaret Bittinger purchased two other telephone exchanges, Ulysses in 1958, and Staplehurst in 1961.

After four years in the navy, Michael, the third generation and oldest son of Vinson and Margaret, became employed by the company and in 1969 he was made first Vice-President. In 1975, Mike, Pat, Tom, Mary and Tim, the five children of Vinson and Margaret, acquired equal shares of stock in the company. Now after seventy years of service to the community, plans are underway for a one party rural system, which hopes to be completed during the bicentennial year of 1976.

WILLIAMS ANGUS FARM

The registered Aberdeen Angus herd of Williams Angus Farm, Clarks, was originally a Commercial herd under the name of J. W. Lumadue previous to 1909. On September 8, 1909, William Williams married the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lumadue, Julia Blanche. The partnership of Lumadue and Williams was formed. The firm name was changed to William Williams and Sons after Mr. and Mrs. Lumadue died. The sons included Clark and Darwin.

In 1933, Darwin Williams purchased a registered Angus cow from a neighbor. This was actually the beginning of the Williams Angus Farm. Following his years in 4-H work, he continued to exhibit cattle. From 1934 until 1938, he exhibited in Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, and Utah.

After Darwin married Lorraine Petersen of Central City, they continued raising and exhibiting Angus cattle and selling registered breeding animals. Mr. and Mrs. Williams are the parents of three children: Marlene (Mrs. Richard Friedrichsen), Marvin, and Karen (Mrs. Steve Miotke).

ART'S GARAGE

Mr. Art Schlondorf came to Clarks on October 14, 1929, in a model T touring car. He started to work for Larson Chevrolet Company which was located across the street north of the water tower and worked until March 31, 1932. On July 6, 1930, he was united in marriage to Verna Barker of York, Nebraska, and two years later they purchased a small house on Amity Street from the Hoffer

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Schlondorf

Estate. When Larson Chevrolet sold out he found himself without work and tried other places to no avail. On April 1, 1932, he rented an old building south of the railroad tracks (formerly the Johnson Blacksmith Shop) for $8 per month. He had only $10 with which to start his garage business, but the first month he earned $75.00. He would grind valves on a Model T for $1. Also in 1932, he bought an old Studebaker car and built his first wrecker on it. During the life of Art's Garage six different wreckers were in use. They moved everything from cars and trucks to buildings, trees, land levelers and haystacks. Mr. Schlondorf tells us, "I think the worst wreck I ever worked on was when a young couple and their five sons ages two to ten years all lost their lives."

In July, 1940, he bought the Thomas Lavelle building just south of his present shop and organized it into a garage. Money was difficult to come by and sometimes as payment for his work Art would take eggs and chickens. He remembers working 78 hours continuously without sleep on a wrecker job and in the shop during World War II. He also did work on trucks hauling war materials, on farm machinery, and welding. He made old horse-drawn go-digs over to be tractor drawn machines. On May 6, 1953, he entered into partnership with Glen Colby and in 1960 they built onto the garage making it a 64 x 60 structure which they enjoyed for ten years. Art sold his share of the business to Mr. Colby on January 1, 1971, and presently Mr. Colby operates the business under the name Colby Garage. In August, 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Schlondorf purchased the home built in 1918 by Mrs. Ida Snider and currently reside there.

STROBEL INDUSTRIES, INC.

On May 9, 1946, Leonard W. Strobel purchased the blacksmith shop located on highway 30 from W. O. Golder. Welding and repair work was done in this shop. In 1971, a corporation was formed with Dwight and Janet Strobel (Mrs. Norman Manstedt). A new building was erected to start manufacturing Lion Loaders and various farm machinery.

ROSE SERVICE STATION AND MOTEL

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Rose came to Clarks in 1934 from Rosemont, Nebraska, and first lived on the farm presently occupied

Mr. Ralph Rose pictured in front of his business in 1964.

by the McNeal family. During the 1940's, Mr. Rose was engaged in business using three John Deere mounted corn shellers. He operated the machinery with Richard Rudman and Fred Ostrander as hired men to help keep the shellers going.

In 1952, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Welhelmy bought the station from Mr. Paul Dohlstedt. At that time the station became a Standard Station. In 1956, they sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Louis Jaeger, who operated it until 1963 when Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Rose purchased it. At present the station and motel are owned and managed by Mr. and Mrs. Rose.

VAN PELT CONSTRUCTION

In 1961, Mr. Dewitt Van Pelt started leveling with one outfit, a 4010 with a Johnson scraper. His friend told him he had made a mistake since he thought "leveling was just about over with." A few years later Mr. Van Pelt "became" the Van Pelt Construction Company. In 1976, the company has increased to one J. D. 5010, one J. D. 760 A, and two J. D. 860's and is engaged in leveling unbelievable fields.

NEW HAVENS BALLROOM

In 1974, Mr. and Mrs. Gene Urkoski purchased the building in Havens formerly owned by Joe and Bettie Monson. In 1936, the Monsons bought a garage building and turned it into a dance hall and roller skating rink and added a cafe. Gene and Phyllis Urkoski completely modernized the building and with the help of many volunteers (like the Bernard Dubas family) the structure was gutted, paneled, and carpeted. The original, maple dance floor was replaced where necessary and then sanded, refinished and waxed to perfection. An estimated 650 people attended the Grand Opening of the "New Havens Ballroom" and danced the polka from 9 till 1 a.m. Guests were from as far away as Loup City, Norfolk, Omaha and Kansas City, Missouri. Under their supervision the New Havens Ballroom is alive again and once more fulfilling the entertainment needs of the community. The Urkoski Family Band was organized in 1952 and consists of Gene's father, Andrew, uncles Pete and Lonnie, Gene, his brother, Allen and cousin Gary — all Urkoskis, and Ben Dush, a cousin to the older brothers. The band travels in a 100 mile radius and has a schedule of wedding dances and a variety of regular dance appearances.

Mr. and Mrs. Gene Urkoski live and farm near Clarks and are the parents of five children. Mrs. Urkoski manages the dance band.

CLOUGHERTY PACKING COMPANY

The company in Clarks began in 1966 and is a division of the Clougherty Plant in Los Angeles, California. Hogs are brought to the plant on Mondays through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At the end of each buying day they are loaded onto triple-decker railroad cars for shipment to the slaughtering plant near Los Angeles. The meat is sold under "Farmer John" meat brands. The hog station is managed by Mr. Gene Koza who has been employed there since 1968. Assisting in this operation is Mr. Jim Jacobi. Mr. Bill Reaman of Clarks was manager when the station first started. The average head of hogs per year is approximately 75,000. The hogs are brought in from local farmers within a radius of forty-five miles. Other Clougherty stations in Nebraska are located at Schuyler, Gibbon and Cozad.

DIANE'S BEAUTY SHOP

In November, 1972, Mrs. Dave Schultz purchased this business from Jackie Wemhoff. The grand opening of the salon was on November 30 at its location in downtown Clarks. In September, 1975, Diane relocated her business in her new home directly across the street from the Congregational Church. She presently works with

permanent waving, hair coloring, cutting and styling for both men and women. Appointments may be made by phoning 548-2433 Tuesday through Saturday. Diane and Dave Schultz are the parents of one son, Eric, age 1½ years.

MERRIMAN'S TAVERN

On May 1, 1972, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Merriman purchased the tavern formerly owned by Leonard and Pauline Robak. Thomas and Diana reside in Clarks with their two daughters, Cindy, age 9, and Jackie, age 5.

Clarks voters approved liquor by the drink in June of 1973. This establishment has on and off sale beer and liquor and also sells short order lunches. Merriman's is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. until 12 midnight.

CONNIE'S BEAUTY SALON

This new shop was opened in Clarks on March 16, 1975, and is owned and operated by Mrs. Randy Pollard. It is located in Hawley's Addition and north of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Mr. and Mrs. Pollard had recently built a double garage and the beauty shop was built on the south end joining their home. Connie specializes in men, women, and children's hair styling. The shop is open Tuesday through Saturdays. Appointments may be made by calling 548-2569. Mr. and Mrs. Pollard are the parents of a daughter, Niki Michele.

ESTATE BUILDERS

This firm was started in 1971 as the D. D. Spires Construction Company and was engaged in remodeling new homes and in the business of general contractors. The owner was Mr. Dennis Spires. In 1972, he formed a partnership with Ted Micek and Jim Wruble and the company's name was changed to Estate Builders. Ted and Dennis worked full-time in the business and Jim worked on a part-time basis. In 1973, Mr. Jim Hansher entered into the existing partnership as a full-time working member. The business was incorporated in 1974. One year later, the location of Estate Builders, Inc., was completely remodeled. It is located at the site of the old Campbells Hall in downtown Clarks. In April, 1976, the grand opening of the new building was held.

Jim Wruble and Ted Micek later sold their shares of the business to Dennis Spires and Jim Hansher. At present the company is engaged in remodeling, Cuckler Metal Building Systems, hardware, agri equipment, paints and wallpaper.

Chapter 8

Album of Biographies
Pioneer Personalities in Clarks

George C. Agnew — born in Indiana in 1852 — came to Clarks in the fall of 1879 and established a drug business in association with J. P. Morrison.

F. George Sr. — born in England — came to Clarks in 1870 and built and operated two mills. He was engaged in the grain and lumber business.

A. A. Honey — born in Massachusetts — learned the art of telegraphy while working for the Western Union Telegraph Company and the Atlantic and Pacific. He came to Clarks on October 4, 1877, where he was the Union Pacific's railroad station agent.

Honorable W. R. Morse — a native of Maine — He came to Clarks in the early 1870's and opened a general store which he ran until 1880. He served as Clarks' postmaster from 1872-1880 and in the fall of 1880 was elected State Senator representing Merrick, Hall, Howard, and Greeley counties, the largest, most populated district in the state at that time.

E. A. Richardson — born in New York — came to Clarks in 1877 and established a drug store. In July of 1880, he was appointed Postmaster and was the Treasurer of the School Board.

Alfred A. Morse — born in New York state — came to Clarks in the late 1870's. He helped to organize #25 School District and served as its director.

John C. Martin (Jack) — born in Pennsylvania — came to Nebraska in 1883 and practiced law — retired from practice in 1928 due to the loss of his sight. He died in 1933.

John McLean — born in New York state, 1838. He worked in the gold fields of California and then sailed around the Horn. He returned to America and came to Council Bluffs in 1866 and engaged in freighting and hauling goods. He stopped at Junction Ranch on his trips and met and married his wife Mary Elizabeth Hartwell on December 14, 1866. In 1874, he entered the mercantile business and conducted a grain elevator in Clarks. He again went west in 1885 and located near Greeley, Colorado, where he died December 2, 1913. He was a lawyer, member of the bar in Merrick County and practiced in Clarks.

Major Franklin Sweet — born in Pennsylvania — farmer and livestockman. At about the age of ten his father moved to Indiana County and then to Armstrong County, Pennsylvania. He enlisted in July, 1861, in company E. 62nd Pennsylvania Infantry as a 1st sergeant, was wounded at the Battle of Gettysburg and confined to the York General Hospital for three months. During this time he was promoted to Captain. He returned to his regiment and served to the expiration of his enlistment. He then returned to Pennsylvania and engaged in farming a short time, then went to Cincinnati. He was a clerk in the County's Recorder Office for three years. In the spring of 1871, he came to Merrick County and took a homestead of 160 acres on Sec. 12., Town 15., Range 5. He engaged in livestock and owned 320 acres. He was Deputy County Clerk three years and County Commissioner one year. He organized what was known as Company F., 1st Regiment National Guard of the State. He was commissioned Captain and promoted to Inspector-General with the rank of Major on the Governor's Staff. He was also a State Representative to the Legislature from the 44th District. He was the uncle of George Sweet, Clarks resident, who manages the Clarks Rescue Unit.

Frank Coyle Family. Left to right: Julia Gates Coyle, Frank, daughter Belle Cosner and son Charlie.

FRANK COYLE FAMILY

Frank Coyle was born in Saratoga County, New York, on March 7, 1848. He was too young to enlist in the Civil War but served three years as an errand boy in the office of Army of the Cumberland headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee. He married Isabel Trainor in Louisville, Kentucky, and brought his fragile, young wife to share the life of the pioneer farmers. Her strength withstood only a short time.

Frank settled in Clarksville in 1868. At the time of his arrival people were speaking of the Indian Massacre of 1867, near Fort

Kearny, where 300 men, women and children were murdered. He stopped in Columbus, Nebraska, on his way to Clarksville and purchased five yoke of oxen from Pat Murray and another man who were the total population in that area of the Platte Valley. He drove that team to Clarksville. He homesteaded (½ mile south of Clarksville), and dug a cellar on his farm lined with logs cut along the Platte. He also built a small granary of logs in preparation for the first harvest. The only water that the Clarks community had when he arrived was supplied from the Union Pacific railroad engines. Every day the engineer of a passing train would fill barrels the citizens left by the tracks. He would use the tank on the railroad engine. Frank Coyle sank the first well in Clarksville. He excavated three feet of soil down to the first quicksand and sank a barrel. The top and bottom of the barrel had been removed. As the water rose in the barrel he put a second barrel atop the first. He found he had supplied himself with plenty of good drinking water.

During the fall and winter he worked as a section hand for the railroad at $1.50 a day, under two section bosses, Luke Lamb and John Higgins. He was said to have remarked how the job of Mrs. Luke Lamb was so difficult, cooking the meals for ten to fifteen laborers every day.

In 1871, James O. Gates of Broom County, New York state, brought his wife and children to Clarksville. The following year Frank Coyle and Julia Gates married. Their home was on the northwest quarter of Section 2-14-5 one-half mile west of Clarks. They soon moved their house a few miles eastward. Julia was married before she was fifteen years old and was blessed with abundant health. She rode a horse as well as any man, always breaking and gentling her own horses. In the 1930's, she drove an old-fashioned buggy and drove a horse no one else had ever driven or cared to drive. On their honeymoon trip, Frank and Julia stayed with the Pat Murrays near Columbus. Later, Mrs. Murray was found beaten and slashed with knives by Sioux Indians and left for dead. She later recovered.

Coyle's first crop was bushels of spud potatoes. He took part in a very important event in Clarksville history — the building of the first bridge across the Platte River in 1876. The township voted $1,000 in bonds and elected three supervisors of the bridge project — Samuel Batty, Frank Coyle and another man. The Union Pacific railroad received the contract for building the bridge and Coyle himself took the subcontract to supply teams and haul the materials to and from the job. The one-half mile long bridge was a monumental task for those days and only took about a month to build.

Neighbors of the Coyles were Mr. and Mrs. Campbell who

credited Frank with saving their house from a prairie fire. Mrs. Campbell took the children to a plowed field and covered them with buffalo robes for protection while Frank "stood at a pump near the house and kept dashing water on the house." Mr. Campbell returned home in time to help. The house was spared but the Campbell barn, feed, hogs, dog, and garden was destroyed.

Frank Coyle was the uncle of Mr. Amos Gates of Clarks. Frank Coyle died in October, 1933, at 85 years of age after residing in Clarks 65 years. Burial was in the Clarks cemetery. Julia died in November, 1954, at St. Mary's Hospital, Columbus, Nebraska. Services were at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Clarks.

LAMB FAMILY

William Lamb, with a family of seven children lived in Roscomon, Ireland. For some unknown reason the children were left orphans. They had relatives living in New York who brought them to America, a few children each time. The youngest children arrived last: Luke, who lived in Clarks, and Mary, who married Rudolph Kombrink of Central City. As the children grew older they went west to Muscatine, Iowa. The boys sought employment in Omaha where Luke and Tom joined a railroad crew building the road west from Omaha to Ogallala. Luke was a foreman and Tom an engineer. Bart freighted supplies driven by oxen from Omaha to Denver. When the railroad was finished they returned to Clarks. At that time (1860's) Clarks was a frontier town. During their building of the railroad the Lamb boys carried weapons at all times because of the Indians.

Luke soon became one of the first section-bosses in Clarks, and there he met Bill Higgins, a fellow railroad worker. Luke and his family lived in one of the first section houses built. Since there was no Catholic church in town at that time, masses were held in Luke's home. Later the small congregation built a small church on Amity Street. Some of the ash trees that the Lamb family planted at that site are still standing. Mike, Luke and Tom were three of the first homesteaders in Clarks, working an area of land by the Platte River and later purchasing land from the railroad for a few dollars per acre. Luke left the railroad's employment to farm and build a home for his family. His wife was Hattie Brophy and to their union were born four children, William, Mike, Edward, and Thomas. Hattie died at an early age, and a few years later Luke married Ellen Naughton. Their children were: Luke, Anna Mary, Gertrude, Agnes, Leo, Ethelfrieda, Eugene, Monica and Mark (Mickey). Luke lived on the farm until his death in 1912. Portions of his farm have been in the Lamb family over 100 years and are being farmed by Rex and Tom Lamb, Luke's grandsons, under the name "Lamb Bros." Luke's oldest daughter lived in Idaho but returned to Clarks after her husband's death. She,

with her small daughter, Elizabeth, took a homestead on Prairie Island and lived there in a small cabin. The place is still in the family and owned by Lamb Bros.

According to family records, the Indians once came to Luke's home looking for food. In those days the houses had large kitchens and heating was by a large pot-bellied stove. In the spring the stove was cleaned and polished for winter use. Mrs. Lamb was a small lady and was ill at that time. As the Indians approached, the family hid her in the stove. The Indians entered the house taking flour, beans, and cured meat and any food they could find. The Lamb girls had small crocks full of jam prepared from their day of picking wild plums and chokecherries. The red men were delighted to get so much food and left peacefully.

The house that Luke Lamb built still stands on the portion of land bought from the Union Pacific railroad and is presently owned by Doris Ann Douglas Creemen.

MR. AND MRS. EBEN IVES

Eben Ives left Ohio in 1849 to seek his fortune in the California gold rush. The following is an account (taken from the FREMONT TRIBUNE) of his travels and was written by a neighbor.

> "As a young man in Ohio in 1849, he determined to seek his fortunes in the newly opened gold mines of California and accord set forth for Philadelphia which he reached by means of stagecoach, canal and foot travel. At Philadelphia he took passage on a sailing ship for Panama and with others, gold-seekers, walked across the isthmus from whence he managed to board a schooner bound for San Francisco. He reached his destination and his mining efforts over the next few years were successful. He then traveled east by wagon train to Iowa from which state he once more began a westward trek, this time for Oregon."

The following is a direct quote from the diary of Mrs. Ives as they crossed the Nebraska Territory:

> "For weeks we had been in constant dread of the Indians who had become unusually hostile, and attacks on the immigrants had been of almost daily occurrence as the new-made graves on the roadside testified. No one can realize the terror these scenes provoked unless they have been a participant. For weeks we had slept ready-dressed with our shoes on, every hour fearing we might be forced to flee from the savages through the sagebrush and cactus. Midnight alarms had been sounded more than once and our stock had been stolen and eyes and ears were

constantly strained, fearing the sight or sound of horrible, painted, fiends that were always hovering near us. It was in August, 1862, in the vicinity of old, Fort Hall that the tragedy occurred which robbed four brave men from Omaha of their lives. That hot, August day can never be forgotten. Our scouts had reported Indians ahead, every man to his gun. The wagons were hastily corraled with the stock and all the women and children gathered on the inside of this corral as their only place of shelter. The men who had arms marched forward to the aid of a small train where the men had been unable to escape or protect themselves from the sudden attack. Four wagons had been cut-off from the rear of the train. The teams were stolen and the wagons burned. Four men lay dead on the road, their bodies mutilated and their scalps torn off. There was no sign left to tell who they might be. The bodies were placed in a wagon loaned by one of our trainsmen. Our own train was ordered to move on as we were corraled in a dangerous location without water and with Indians hovering near us. All day long the funeral train dragged itself over the blistering road so thick with a cloud of dust you could scarcely see your own teams. Just at sundown we reached a camping place, it was Sunday evening. Some men were sent to guard the stock, some stationed on the high rocks to give alarms if the Indians appeared, others were sent to get wood and water. Then came those who were detailed to prepare the grave for the unknowns. A slight elevation near with willow boughs was dug then the bodies were laid upon the grass by the open grave. When they were about to place the bodies in the grave all soiled with blood and dust, their features unrecognizable, a tenderhearted woman with grown sons stepped out and demanded they be properly prepared for the grave. With gentle hands she washed their distorted features and cut a tiny lock of hair from the little left by the scalping knife. There could be no shroud or coffin but we lined the grave with willow boughs. One woman furnished a sheet from her scanty store of goods to cover the bodies. Over this more willow boughs were placed then the sod and sand was thrown over them and the grave filled level with stones to save them from the prowling coyotes. A minister, who was one of our train, said a short prayer for their souls and the funeral was over. A plank taken from the deck of one wagon furnished the head board and on it these words were written: unknown dead, number and date of the

deaths and by whom found; this was painted in black letters. The day was done. The night with its terrors and loneliness had fallen. Two days later we came up with the remnants of the little company. Here we learned the names of the victims and the particulars of the attack, also the bravery of the boys. They might have saved themselves had they been cowards but they returned to the assistance of those who were strangers, after they, themselves, had escaped the savages. Besides the dead there were four wounded and twelve other men who had lost everything and were on foot and helpless. These were distributed among the more fortunate ones and remained with our train until the settlements in eastern Oregon were reached. The names of the four men we buried was furnished by the remaining man who was also shot through the lungs, the bullet coming out through the shoulderblade. He lived and by the time we reached Portland was well and we parted company. Frank Loman was one out of the five boys who escaped the scalping knife. The dead were Jones, Parmale, Heart and Steele — I never heard their given names. They were bound for the mines of the Soloman River."

Becoming dissatisfied with life on the Pacific Northwest, Mr. Ives once more crossed the plains and came back to his Iowa starting point. He left there about 1870 and took up a homestead in Maple Creek Valley, Dodge County, Nebraska. Mr. and Mrs. Ives were the maternal grandparents of Mr. Robert W. Divine, a Clarks resident.

WILLIAM H. DIVINE FAMILY

William H. was born in Dutchess County, New York, on December 2, 1829. His father died at an early age, and he lived with his uncle for five years before venturing out on his own. He was married to Miss Eliza A. Curtis in Cayuga County on January 15, 1852, and they were the parents of two children — Charles A. and a baby daughter who died in infancy. In the spring of 1879 they came to Dodge County, Nebraska, and located on a 200 acre farm in Maple Valley. They built a large frame house and erected barns, granary and sheds where they sheltered hay, horses and cattle. Mr. Divine was also a blacksmith, a trade he learned in his youth. Charles A. Divine later lived in North Bend, Nebraska, and their son, Edward O., married Daisy Mabel Ives and moved to Merrick County in 1918. They were engaged in farming. To this union six children were born, namely Edward O. Jr., Caroline (Haynes), Robert W., Marcella (Vogel), Mary Jane (Jacobsen) and Clifford A. Robert W. Divine,

presently of Clarks, had five sons, Robert W. Jr. (deceased), Richard W., an attorney, Randolph W., a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Ronald W., a medical doctor, and Raymond W. (deceased).

Frank Adams

ADAMS AND FOX FAMILIES

This family saga began in Illinois in 1844 with the birth of William Adams. He served with Co. B 54th Infantry G.A.R. and was later wounded. In 1880 he came to Merrick County and filed timber claim application #2308. The following year he received certificate #2794 signed by President James A. Garfield for 160 acres about five miles northwest of Clarks. The area is now occupied by the Edward J. Jarecke Family. William married Amanda E. Cosner (1851-1909) and their three children were born on the homestead, namely Nettie Ann (1877-1966, Mrs. Arthur R. Trail), Lillie May (1875-1925, Mrs. Benjamin Lacy), and Franklin George ("Frank," 1873-1945).

Adams family records tell the story that follows: "One day a Pawnee brave rode up to the Adams family home and asked for a gourd. They were grown to use as dippers. Amanda told him to get one and he replied that it was 'squaw's work'. He rode and she walked to the patch and picked up the first one she came to. The

brave let her know it was cracked — for he had been there already. He then pointed to the exact gourd he wanted."

The descendants of this family are the owners of many momentos of the early pioneer days. Still in use is a rocking chair used to keep baby Frank quiet while the Indians roamed about. An 1884 autograph book belonging to Frank Adams and an 1891 bank book of the Merrick County Bank, Clarks, are examples.

Lulu Estella Fox

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Fox

FOX FAMILY

Matthew J. Fox (1835-1925) was born near Adams Center, Jefferson County, New York. He and his wife, the former Syble Green moved to Nebraska to a farm west of Silver Creek in 1878. The resided there twenty-one years. Three children were born to them — Lillian, William J., and Lulu Estella. The Blizzard of 1888 found Lulu in school at school District #40. Her uncle Will took a team and wagon to take his children and Lulu home. Imagine the mother's anxiety when the teacher walked into their home the next day to inquire as to Lulu's whereabouts. She was, of course, snug and safe.

In January, 1901, Lulu married Frank Adams and they lived on the homestead all of their married lives. Lulu died in 1933 and Frank in 1945. They are buried in Bureau Cemetery at Pierce Chapel. The four Adams children were all born on the family homestead — Roderick Earl, Clifford William, Audrey Syble, and Idona Dee (Mrs.

Fred Swedenburg). Fred Swedenburg and Idona Dee Adams were married in 1944 and they have three children, Celinda Lu born 1948, Thomas Alan, 1950, and Donn Curtis, 1952. Celinda married Clayton John Madinger in 1967 and they are the parents of two daughters. Thomas is a pharmacist on the staff of Ohio State University. Donn married Barbara Jean Palu and presently resides in Omaha where he is a sergeant in the U.S. Air Force.

MR. AND MRS. DUKE DUDNEY

Mr. Dudney came to Clarksville from England in 1870. Two years later he was joined by his wife, Emilie, and their children, Duke, George and Lizzie. They lived for several weeks with the George Spires family north of town until their own house was finished. They homesteaded six miles north of Clarks and his timber claim is the site of the Doris Johnson farm. Three more children, Frank, Anna and Nellie, were born in Nebraska. Friendly Pawnee Indians often came to the Dudney farm. They would walk into the house, take what was cooking on the stove, eat it with their fingers and many times go to sleep on the kitchen floor. Mrs. Dudney spent the night sitting in a chair fearful for her family, never sleeping. They also lived in Nance County. They were buried in the family plot in the Bureau Cemetery at Pierce Chapel.

MR. AND MRS. THOMAS JEFFERSON STEARNS

Thomas and Caroyl Stearns came from Appleton, Wisconsin, in 1878 to what is now the town of Fullerton. They lived on the Pawnee Indian Reservation for about a year with their children, Cora, Eva, Willard and Archie. For months they saw only Indians and coyotes. Mr. Stearns served over three years in the Civil War and was active in the Battle of Bull Run and later in General Sherman's famous march to the sea. He helped organize the G.A.R. Veterans group in Clarks. Mr. Stearns wore his Army dress uniform and wide-trimmed tasseled blue hat in the Decoration Day parades. After the war he continued to practice the carpentry trade. He swam the Loup River to go to work building houses in Clarks. When a bridge was built the family moved to Clarks in 1879. They resided in a home built by Mr. Stearns on Front Street in the west block facing the railroad. Born in that house were Fannie (Birdie) and Brownie. The house was later moved and more rooms added and in 1975 the John Lamb Family tore it down. Thomas Stearns built many homes in Merrick and Nance counties, two of which are still standing — the home of Hayes Randall and the home of the Bernard Didiers.

MR. AND MRS. ARCHIE STEARNS

Archie Stearns married Lizzie Dudney and lived their entire married live in Clarks. He served as village weigh-master. At that time there were no grain elevators and the only scales to weigh corn, wheat, baled hay and coal were located in a small building. It stood where the old Clarks fire house is now. He also served the town as lamp-lighter and drove a one-horse buggy around to light the oil-burning street lights. The lamps were lit every evening and only enough oil was put into them to last until the morning. In 1900 rural delivery mail service was established and Mr. Stearns passed the Civil Service exam to be appointed rural mail carrier on route #2 (30 miles). He carried the mail first with horses and then with the aid of a Model T Ford. That same route is now 116 miles long. He served in this position for almost thirty years, until his death in 1929. Lizzie Stearns died in 1956; they are buried in Bureau Cemetery. They were the parents of one daughter, Cleo Marie, now Cleo Marie Schank, Clarks librarian since 1930.

An old fashioned "Sing" party at the Hoffer family home. Among those pictured are members of the Willits, Krader, Hoffer, Waggoner, and Bates families.

THE WILLITS FAMILY

Horace Willits and Elizabeth (Molly) Sheriff were married in Mercer County, Illinois, and journeyed by covered wagon to Polk County in 1862. They homesteaded 160 acres twelve miles west of Osceola. Horace was a Civil War Veteran. They built a sod house and

school house on their property as well as a small cemetery. They were the parents of: Grant, Glenn, Edith, May, Lytle and Clair. When Lytle became ill his father Horace rode to the Platte River trying to get the doctor's help. The water was too high so he crossed on a barge and then took a fresh horse and rode into Clarks. Dr. Martin was new in practice and told him, "Your baby has diabetes. We've just discovered what it is, but we do not know a cure — the baby will die in two weeks." The doctor's prophecy was fulfilled. A large buffalo herd once crossed the Willits front yard. Friendly Indians used to beg for Mrs. Willits' homemade bread. They were dried out during their first year of homesteading so they returned to Illinois to earn money for seed. They leased their soddy to newly married Dana Little, a teacher at the High Prairie School. The Willits returned home before the school year was finished and built a small home with lumber purchased at Seward.

Glenn Willits married Nora Krader and to this union were born four children: Clyde Clinton, Marie (Mrs. Budd Vincent), Florence M., and Donald D. Glenn and Nora lived their last twenty years in Clarks in the home now occupied by the Brunken Family. He passed away at age 94 and Nora was 98. Florence M. Willits in 1922 married Clifford Johnston and they presently live on their farm near Riverside School in Polk County. Florence was employed in 1919 in Clarks by Tom Keefe's Drug Store. During that time she lived with her cousins Ross and Edith Noble. She attended Kearney State. Florence and her father, Glenn, cared for her mother three years during an illness and helped remodel their home after the damaging tornado in Clarks in 1928. Florence and Clifford Johnston are the parents of Betty (Mrs. Ted Swanson), who formerly taught in Clarks, Wesley and Verlie of Grand Island, and Larry of Lincoln, Nebraska.

MR. AND MRS. SAMUEL KRADER

Samuel and Amanda Mentzer were married in Naperville, Mercer County, Illinois, in 1870. They moved to Columbus, Nebraska, in 1875, where Samuel was first miller for a Mr. Welch who owned and operated the Shell Creek Flour Mill. The mill was operated by water power from a nearby stream. Indians often came to have their corn meal made. Only once, an Indian from Genoa refused to pay. Mr. Krader let it pass as a joke. They were the parents of seven children who grew up and lived in and near Clarks. The children were: Emma (Mrs. Reason Waggoner), Nora (Mrs. Glenn Willits), Alvin, Ervin, Rueben, Nettie (Mrs. Dana Hurd), and Verna (Mrs. Irl Hoffer).

About the year 1897, when the mile-long bridge stood across the Platte River, Grandma Krader was the owner of Lukies Island. It is now owned by Overland Sand and Gravel Company of Stromsburg.

She and her unmarried children lived on "Krader's Island." A few years later she was in need of $100 and went to the bank to borrow it. She did not understand business matters well. She thought she was signing a note, but it was a "quit claim deed." Since she had no money to defend herself, she lost her home. She spent the rest of her life helping her family.

ISAIAH WAGGONER FAMILY

This family came from Moultrie County, Illinois, when their son, Reason, was four years of age. Isaiah and his wife, Phoebe, resided in the High Prairie area until they were no longer able to farm. He was a preacher and Elder of the Primitive Baptist Church. Another son, Malden Waggoner and his family purchased a farm northwest of Clarks near Pierce Chapel. A daughter, Iva, a graduate of Clarks High School, later married Vernon Sidders. Two sons, Harvey and Allen, were also Clarks residents. Edith Mae Waggoner attended the Swedenburg Public School. The family lived on Luke Lamb Island on the north channel of the Platte River. The channel was used by the family as a swimming area and skating rink. Later, they moved to the Heinemeyer farm east of Clarks, south of the Hartwell school.

HENRY ROSE FAMILY

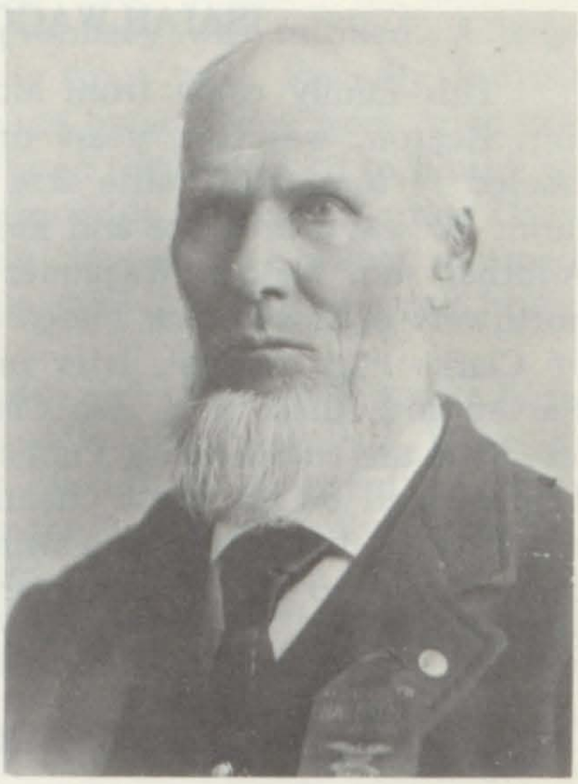
In 1870, Henry Rose journeyed to Clarksville from Canton, New York, and homesteaded three miles north of town. At that time there were only six houses in Clarks and Mr. Rose, one of the first carpenters in town, was kept busy building homes and schools. He built the District #16 schoolhouse four miles north and one and one-half miles east of Clarks. He sometimes walked miles to work carrying his carpentry tools. In 1871 he built a home and sent for his wife and five children to join him. Three children were born in Clarks — Mary, George and Clara. The older boys farmed with oxen and all the children helped in milking their cows and making cheese to sell. The younger boys herded the cows over the prairie between Clarks and the river.

Mary Rose lived all her life in and around Clarks. She was married to Mr. Ed Boettner and they had four children — Flora, Laura, Fern and Frank. Flora later became Mrs. Bert Ferguson; Laura was a Clarks resident for thirty-five years and presently resides in Wyoming; Fern married Robert Lindahl and lives in Clarks; Frank now lives in Central City, Nebraska.

Fern and Robert Lindahl are the parents of three daughters — Anita, Doris and Shirley. Doris (Mrs. Hollis Stromberg) lives on the west edge of Clarks. Their second daughter, Jean, married Don Neel

and their marriage united two pioneer families who were friends and neighbors through six generations in Merrick County. The Neel children, Christie and Todd, have nine grandparents and great-grandparents all living in Merrick County — Raymond and Elsie Beck, Robert and Fern Lindahl, Hollis and Doris Stromberg, Glen and Doris Neel, and Mr. Pete Stromberg.

John Fletcher Cole



Mary R., wife of John F. Cole

JOHN F. COLE FAMILY

In April of 1871, John Fletcher Cole, age 49, and wife Mary R., age 44, with seven of their eight sons and one daughter arrived by covered wagon in Clarksville. The family was allowed to stay in a vacant one-room house northwest of town until other living arrangements could be made. Before a temporary shelter for the horses could be made, a severe blizzard came. Fearing the horses might perish from exposure, leaving the family helpless without a team, Mrs. Cole moved their few possessions to one end of the house and Mr. Cole brought the gentle team into the opposite end to spend the night. Mr. Cole filed a claim to land about one mile east of Clarks which later became known as the Key Brothers' farm.

The Pawnee Indians came occasionally and being treated well by the Coles, the Indians did not steal from them, but watched them closely. One Indian always seemed to know when the Coles were going to thresh grain and would come to watch. Mrs. Cole would invite the Indian to sit at the table and eat dinner which he seemed to thoroughly enjoy!

Mary R. died at Clarks January 2, 1893, and was buried in the Clarks Cemetery.

Two of the John F. Cole children remaining in the Clarks area were Mary Elizabeth (Mrs. Granville Smith) and Robert M.

Family Reunion photo of the children of John F. and Mary Cole. William, John H., Robert, Charles, Barrett, Clarence, Mary E. Cole Smith. Absent were Sam and Frank.

MARY ELIZABETH COLE (MRS. GRANVILLE SMITH)

Mary Elizabeth Cole was born March 5, 1866, in Scott County, Minnesota, and came to Clarksville with her parents at the age of five. She and her brothers walked across the prairie to school where her teacher, Mrs. Martin, gave her the name "Lizzie," a nickname which many people continued to call her. In time a larger school building was erected a block south of the present school yard. Mary attended there until she taught a term of rural school, then went to Minneapolis. She stayed one year and attended school there while staying with her brother.

Mary joined the Clarks Methodist Church in 1885 and was an active member serving in various offices in both church and women's societies.

On September 15, 1886, Mary and Granville Smith were married and four children were born to them. The two surviving sons, Melvin and Willard, are married and with their families live in California.

Mary Cole Smith died September 28, 1959, with burial beside her husband in the Clarks Cemetery.

ROBERT M. COLE

Robert M. Cole was born in New Albany, Indiana, January 13, 1854, and immigrated to Minnesota with his parents and four brothers in 1860. He came with his parents to Clarksville at the age

Mr. and Mrs.
Ira C. Richmond

of seventeen. He was a mason by trade.

Robert was married to Martha E. Richmond at Osceola, Nebraska, on September 29, 1878. Martha E. was the daughter of Ira C. and Jane Richmond who came from Brighton, Ontario, Canada, to Nebraska and then to Clarksville in 1872. Ira was a livery stable keeper in Clarksville.

Robert and Martha made their home in Clarks with their nine children until Martha's death December 18, 1908, at the age of 48 years. Martha is buried in the Clarks Cemetery.

In 1910 Robert took his four youngest children with him to Redcliff, Alberta, Canada, where he homesteaded. He resided there until a few months before his death in 1924 which occurred while he was visiting at the home of his brother, Barrett, at Laramie, Wyoming. He was buried at Laramie.

Of the four children who accompanied their father to Canada, only one, Mildred E., returned to this area to make her home.

Mildred E. was married to Ralph M. Glasser at Polk, Nebraska, on December 12, 1928. Ralph and Mildred came to Clarks in 1938 and made their home in the Clarks community until Ralph's death in 1974. Mrs. Glasser is presently living at Parkview Home in Central City, Nebraska.

Two sons, Ronald and Marvin, were born to them. Ronald married Dorothy Dahlin of Polk, and with their daughter, Ronda, reside on the family farm east of Clarks.

GRANVILLE J. SMITH

Granville Smith was a contractor who came to Clarks in 1882 at the age of 30. He built and remodeled more than 400 homes in the Clarks community besides doing many other types of construction and repair. He helped build the first skating rink in Clarks and upon completion of the project the owner found he lacked $17.00 of having enough to pay Granville the wages due him. Mr. Smith did not mind the money owed him — he skated and collected his wages in full.

Mr. and Mrs. Granville Smith and sons, Clifford (dec), Melvin, and Willard.

Granville was very interested in community affairs and helped organize the first band in Clarks. In later years he organized and was leader of another band in the community. He was a violinist, gave violin lessons, and contributed his fine, tenor voice to the Methodist Church choir.

On September 15, 1886, he married Mary E. Cole. They celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in their home at Clarks. Their entire married life was spent in the Clarks community with the exception of two years, 1910-1911, spent in Colorado where they homesteaded. Granville died at the age of 94.

CHARLES ADAMS NOBLE FAMILY

Charles Adams Noble was born in 1829 near Syracuse, New York, and moved with his family to the Ohio Territory when he was fifteen years of age. He married a fellow New Yorker, Betsy Jane Johnson, and they were the parents of two children, namely Milton Adams and Henry Cutler. Henry later married Nellie Rose in 1880 in the Clarks Congregational Church, and they later lived on East Amity Street. The home's site is presently occupied by the Dennis Spires family. During 1900 they moved to Genoa where Henry worked in a brickyard. Seven children were born to them. A daughter died shortly after birth. Their son, Cecil, died in childhood. Other sons included Ross, Leon, Floyd, Charles and Harold.

Ross Noble was born two and one-half miles east of Clarks on October 21, 1884. He married Edith Waggoner in 1908 and they were the parents of three children. They are Cecil Claud (deceased), Nina Iola (Mrs. William McCoy of El Segundo, California), and Mamie (Mrs. Virgil Leach of Grand Island, Nebraska). Ross later became an auctioneer and studied at the Davis School of Correspondence in Lincoln, Nebraska. He received a grade of 98% on his examination. His diploma gave him the title of Colonel. He was a master with the ability to "roll the bid." In his sales he respected the bidder and endeavored to receive a fair price for the owner selling the property. Later he established his own dairy. He began with one cow

and finally had several head. Each animal was selected with care to produce quality milk. He had pride in the products as his customers on the route understood. Ross was a man of various interests. He hung wallpaper, helped lay the pavement in Clarks in the 1920's, and worked on the pavement of the state highway in 1930. He also acted as Clarks Marshall at intervals and was the Community Santa Claus. He was a member of the Clarks National Guard during World War I. That unit would dress in full uniform and drill on the east side of the Clarks Public School grounds.

Mrs. Noble was an excellent cook and seamstress. Her angel food cakes took purple ribbons at the fair that was held in the grove just north of the Gantz and Snider homes northwest of town. On February 5, 1958, Ross and Edith celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in California. Ross died in 1964 and Edith died in 1973 and were buried in the Polk, Nebraska, Cemetery.

DAVID GILBERT FAMILY

One hundred years ago, David Gilbert traveled from Hicksville, Ohio, to Nebraska, staking a timber claim two and one-half miles north of Clarks. He also planted a large grove of cottonwood trees on his farm. The trees were later made into lumber planks used to build a new barn. He built a farm home which housed the nine members of his family. The barn remained on the farm until the 1960's when it was torn down. The original Gilbert home was later used by the Clarks Fire Department during their fire-saving programs. The structure was set afire and the firemen extinguished the flames with foam. The Nebraska State Fire Chief came to Clarks to view the scene and firemen from several communities also took part. Dummies were placed inside the small house and "saved" many times. David's daughter, Laura, a Clarks teacher, later married Fred Brown and the Gilbert farm was then used as a feeding and slaughtering center. The materials were then used to supply the Charles Brown Meat Market in Clarks.

THE BROWN BROTHERS

Charles, Fred, Alfred, Joe, John, and William Brown were born in Pecatonica, Illinois. Joe and William remained in Illinois and the other four brothers came to Clarks. Fred and Charles arrived in the 1880's and built several buildings on the east side of town which later housed businesses. Alfred operated the light plant. Fred married Maude McLean, Charles married Laura Gilbert, and Alfred married Sophia Morgan. The brothers left Clarks about 1900 and expected to locate in Wyoming. They later returned to rebuild their buildings which had been destroyed by fire. The Fire Department in those

Charlie, Fred, Joe, Will and Alf Brown

times was composed of a "bucket brigade." Men, women and children also assisted in extinguishing the fire. Charles and Fred operated a meat market in Clarks and Fred later farmed northeast of town.

The descendants of the Brown Brothers are: Isabel and Betty Brown of Clarks, Florence Brown Snider of Central City, Jule Brown and Mildred Rich of California.

MR. and MRS. JOHN WESLEY LUMADUE
(L'Hommedieu, man of God)

John W. Lumadue arrived in Clarks on April 10, 1871. He had traveled by covered wagon from Buda, Bureau County, Illinois. He had served four years in the Rebellion, a member of the Illinois Infantry Volunteers, Company 12. After two years of farming he was anxious to go west to obtain a soldier's homestead. His wife remained in Illinois until he was settled in Nebraska. Upon his arrival, he stayed overnight at the Turner farm along the Union Pacific railroad where the post office was then located. The following day he located six miles northwest of the present town of Clarks. At that time the area was a barren tract of land without trees, shrubbery or grass. He paid 25¢ for a telegraph pole which he put his wagon cover on to mark the location of his land. He then began to build a house, hauling the lumber from Columbus. His little house measured 16' x

J. W. Lumadue family. Seated: J. W., Jane, Charles. Standing, left to right: Jeanette, Emma, Anna, Myrtie, Julia.

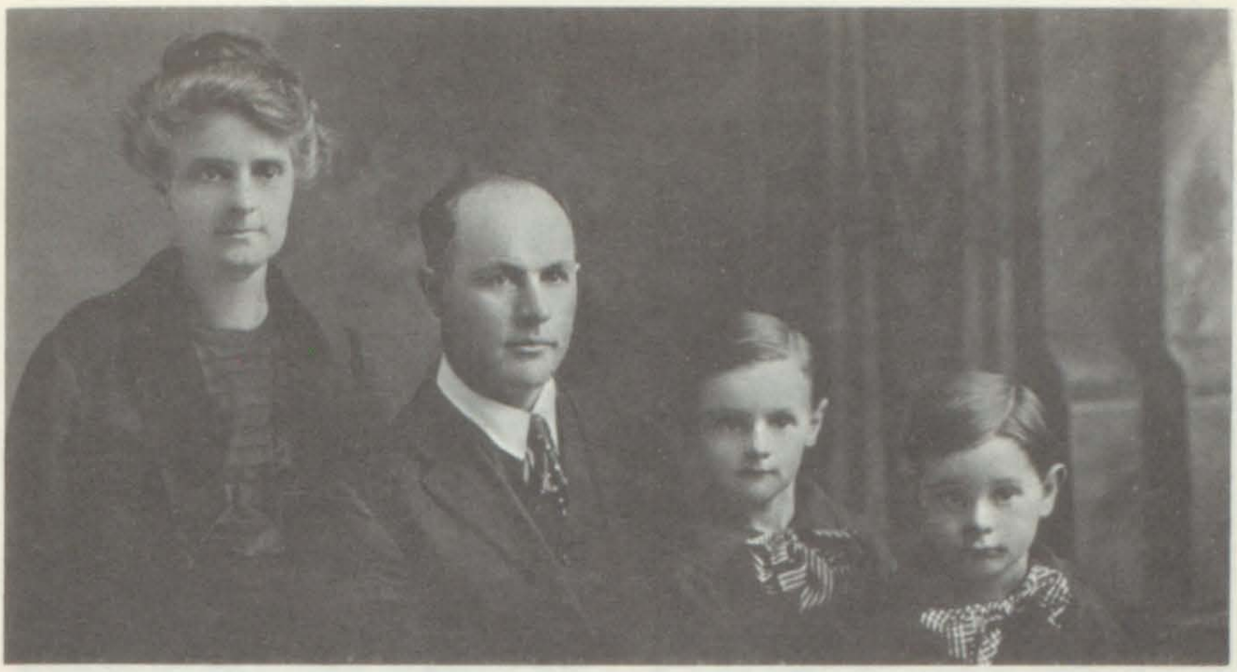
The John Lumadue home. Julia, Mrs. J. Lumadue, John Lumadue, Nettie.

20'. He made built-in furniture such as trundle beds and tables. Most of his neighbors lived in sod houses. John broke sixty acres of land and plowed fire breaks because prairie fires were one of the terrors of the settlers. Many times he had his eyebrows and hair singed from close contact with fire while plowing to save someone's home.

A "relief car" came once from the home town in Illinois. It was a great relief, indeed, but in so many cases the distributors "feathered their own nest" and many deserving families went without needed items. A strange thing about the occurrence was that those people in charge of the benevolences never prospered in later years. During those years the housewife always waited with anxiety for her husband's return. She tried to keep the home fire burning but this was difficult to do with green wood. She would dry it in the oven and on top of the stove in order to get some that would burn readily.

Mrs. John Lumadue (Jane) arrived by train in Clarks in 1872 with two small daughters, three year old Anna and one year old Emma. She recalled that the Indians were a terror to the housewives. When their husbands were away the red men would peek into the window and point at their face and say "pale face." The following is a story written by Mrs. Lumadue: "I shall never forget the night my man along with others went to Clarks to organize the School District. I had gone to bed with our two small girls and was awakened by the sound of a bugle and noises in the distance. I was so frightened I could hear my heartbeat, and I never moved. Finally when my husband came home I asked him if he had seen or heard anything. He said 'No'. The next day the Pawnee told us the Sioux had come down from the north and stolen some squaws and ponies."

The Lumadue's cow was called Cherokee because it came from the reservation. Jane churned the cream in a quart jar so that she could write to her mother in Illinois and tell her they had butter for



William and Julia (Lumadue) Williams and sons, Clark and Darwin.

their bread. Antelope, deer and wolves roamed the prairie. A mountain lion came near their farm building one day, and John attempted to shoot him but the cat was too swift. John planted trees and during the time when other settlers were returning east discouraged he recorded, "I believe there is a future here." In later years, he also handled stock, renting pasture land to cattlemen who drove their herds from York County. He also was engaged in the registered Angus business. John and Jane Lumadue had three other daughters and one son born on the ranch northwest of Clarks. All of their children were: Anna (Mrs. John Beck, Clarks), Emma (Mrs. George Barker of York, Nebraska), Nettie (Mrs. J. C. Inbody, Clarks), Charles W. Lumadue (Lincoln and Central City), Myrtie (Mrs. Wm. Grant, Clarks), Julia (Mrs. William Williams, Clarks).

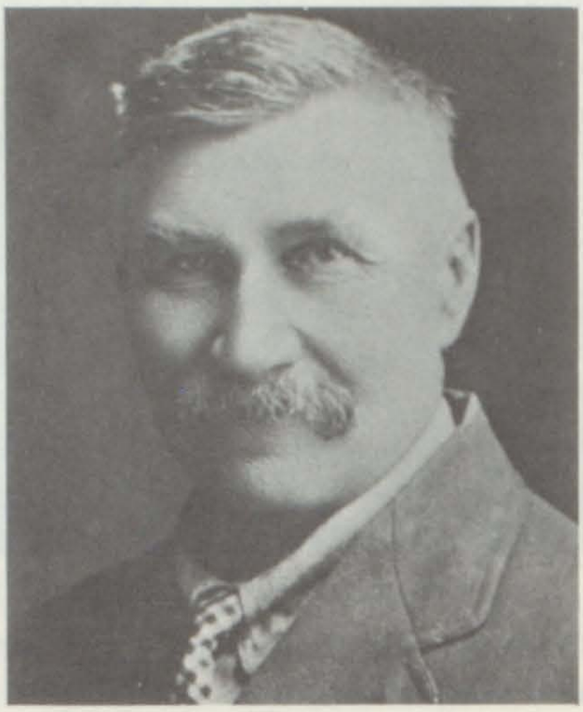
Mr. J. W. Lumadue died on September 26, 1914. Many of the second, third, fourth, and fifth generations of this pioneer couple still reside in Clarks and Merrick County.

MR. AND MRS. JOHN BECK

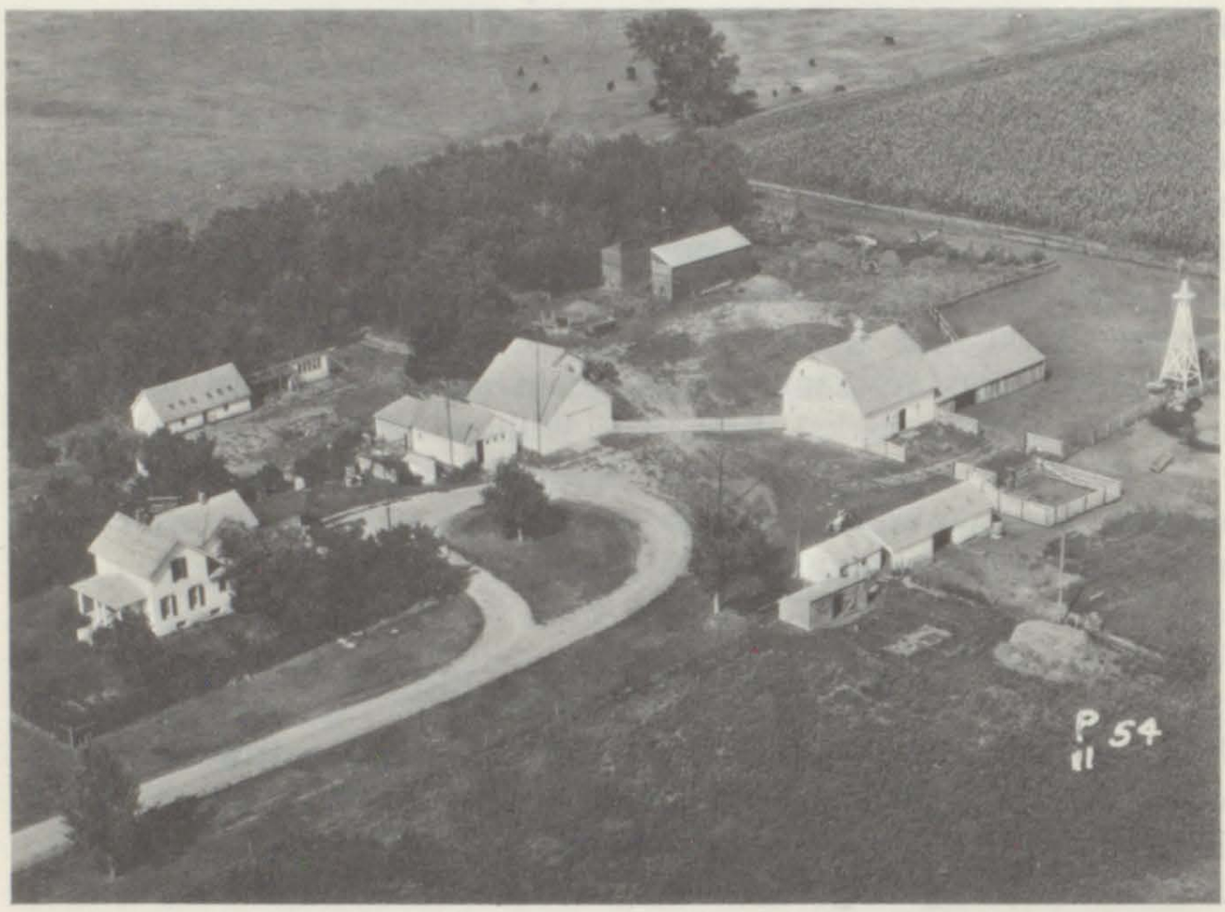
John Beck journeyed to America with his parents when he was four years of age. Their native home was Berlin, Germany. In 1854, they settled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His father died shortly after their arrival and young John went to work in a lumber camp. In the spring of 1871, he came to Merrick County and took an eighty acre homestead. He worked for the Union Pacific as a member of the bridge crew and traveled with them almost to the coast. He then returned home to Clarks, and built a little house on his original homestead. On July 4, 1885, he was married to Margaret Ann Lumadue. Mr. and Mrs. Beck were blessed with 11 children: Iva,

Dave, Frank, Walter, Raymond, Lizzie and Leslie (twins), Zoe, Teddie, Albert, and Ruth.

Mrs. John Beck



Mr. John Beck



John Beck homestead, presently owned by Mrs. Ruth Fish.

MR. AND MRS. W. T. GRANT

W. T. Grant came to Polk County from Valparaiso, Nebraska, in 1888. He left Polk County after a few years and purchased a farm just east of the Pierce Chapel Cemetery. In 1901 he was united in

Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Grant

marriage to Myrtie Lumadue. Two children were born to this union, Fern (1903) and Bernard (1913). In the spring of 1917, they rented their farmland and moved into Clarks where they lived for thirteen years. Mr. Grant was employed by Clarksville Township and during World War I bought horses and mules and sold them to the U.S. government. Later they moved back to the farm until his retirement. Their descendants number one grandson and two great-grandsons. Mrs. Grant died in 1955 and her husband two years later.

THE WILLIAMS FAMILY

William Williams and Julia Lumadue were married September 8, 1909, and made their home on the Lumadue farm northwest of Clarks. They were the parents of two sons, Clark and Darwin.

Clark married LaVeta Haynes also of Clarks. They are the parents of two children, Gae (Mrs. Marland Beckstrom), and Monte, and have seven grandchildren.

Darwin and his wife, the former Lorraine Petersen, Central City, are living on the home place at this time. They are farming and raising registered Angus cattle. They are the parents of three children, Marlene (Mrs. Richard Friedrichsen), Marvin, and Karen (Mrs. Steve Miotke), and have four grandchildren.

THE FRANK ROSE FAMILY

Frank Rose came to Nebraska from St. Lawrence County, New York, at the age of two with his parents and his two sisters, Myra and Cora. He arrived on October 11, 1872. His parents homesteaded a farm located one mile north and three-fourths of a mile west of

Pleasant Hill.

The family's first home was a small dugout about sixteen foot square. Approximately four foot of this structure was underground, with a crude framework above, which was partially banked with dirt for extra warmth. The roof was made of poles, covered with straw and dirt. The floor was dirt, part of which was covered with planks.

During this first year, Frank's father, Ben, made a living for his family by making yokes for oxen and ax handles, and by repairing wagons for early settlers. He made all wooden parts for the wagons except the hubs. In time, he became friends with the Indians, who then let him have all the wood that he needed for making these things. Some years later, he operated a cheese factory.

Frank had a faint memory of the April Blizzard of 1873, which started on the 14th and lasted for three days. The following summer the county was infested by grasshoppers, completely destroying all vegetation. He also remembered seeing the Pawnee Indians migrate across the section south of his home when he was just a small boy.

Frank and his sisters were privileged to receive some education at the "Pleasant Hill" School. The blizzard of 1888, which he remembered very well, occurred during his school years. His mother was his teacher at this time.

On December 15, 1891, he married Lelia Wilson of Clarks. She had also come to Nebraska as a child from Sparta, Illinois.

They raised a family of eight children: Walter (deceased), Ralph, Ernest (deceased), Clarence (deceased), Mabel (Mrs. Leslie Black), Wilbur, Effie (Mrs. Cheney Shelton), and Alice Mae (Mrs. Gerald Galusha). The family attended the Pierce Chapel church. They enjoyed making musical contributions both at church and community affairs.

They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in 1941 with an open house in their home and all of their children in attendance. Frank died on December 27, 1943, and Lelia on October 10, 1944. Their years together had been made up of much happiness, and some sorrow.

THE DAVIS-BRUNK FAMILY

Elizabeth Welton was born in 1837, in Williams County, Ohio. At sixteen years of age she was united in marriage to Walter Davis and they were farmers in Ohio. Three sons came to bless their home, namely Jason, Joseph and Ellsworth.

Walter was serving in the Civil War when he was hospitalized and later died in an army hospital.

When Ellsworth was nearly three years of age, his mother married William Brunk who had been an officer in the army. To this union was born one daughter, Alice (Mrs. Willard Stanley).

In 1871, when Ellsworth was nine years of age, the Brunk family moved to Clarks, living on a farm east of town. The four children attended District #7 school. Herding cattle on the range was Ellsworth's duty during the summer — his noon lunch a pocket full of corn bread.

In 1884, he was married to Eva Headley of Williams County, Ohio. They moved to Clarks and he started his barber shop. Their four children were: Lena, born in 1886; Earl, born in 1894; Viva, born in 1896; and Helen, born in 1889. Helen died at the age of two years. All three children attended Clarks school and were high school graduates.

Earl was married to Florence Hansen in 1918, and Walter and Adrian (Jack) were born in Clarks. Earl died in 1963 and Florence recently. E. Davis operated his barber shop for more than fifty years. years.

Elizabeth Brunk

Ellsworth Davis

Vess and Viva Whetstine

THE WHETSTINE FAMILY

Viva Davis was married to Sylvester (Vess) Whetstine in September, 1919. In 1922, they moved to Clarks and Vess joined Ellsworth Davis in the barber shop. Their children were Virginia, born in Marysville in 1920, and Margaret, born in Clarks in 1924. Both girls graduated from Clarks High School.

In 1941, Virginia was married to Alfred Lorenzen. On Alfred's return from Germany, he and Virginia lived in Grand Island with their son, Steve. Margaret married Clifford McGreevy Jr. and their daughter, Mary, was born. They moved to Port Arthur, Texas, and seven years later daughter Janice was born.

In 1943, Mr. and Mrs. Whetstine moved to Grand Island to

work at Cornhusker Ordinance Plant. At the end of the war he had his barber shop, which he operated until his death in 1959. The family had just celebrated his and Viva's 40th Wedding Anniversary.

Later Viva went to Port Arthur to live with the McGreevy Jr. and Alfred Lorenzen families (Lubbock, Texas).

Virginia (Alfred passed away in 1973) lives in Lubbock, Texas. Margaret and Clifford Jr. live in Port Arthur, Texas.

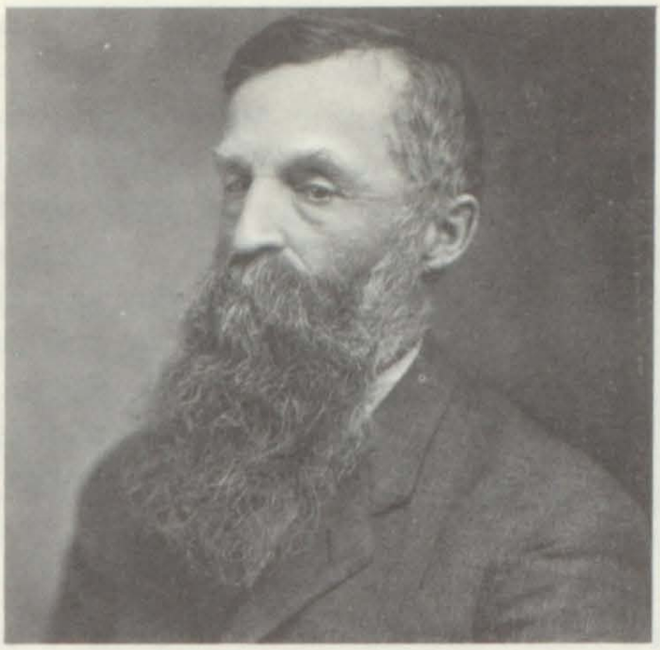
EDWIN E. CAMPBELL FAMILY

Edwin Eldridge Campbell, son of Eldridge and Cordella Campbell, was born on November 9, 1872, in Clarks. At the age of nine, he and his parents moved to Genoa where he resided until his marriage to Minnie Burch on January 1, 1900. One year later they moved to Merrick County where he was engaged in farming. He also spent eight years in Sterling, Colorado, on a homestead. His wife was born on April 7, 1882, in Caroker City, Kansas. The couple retired from farming in March, 1945, and moved to a home in Clarks. They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on January 1, 1950. One week later Edwin suffered a fall from which he never recovered. At the time of his death on July 11, 1952, he was an invalid and resident of the Barnes Nursing Home in Central City. In 1963, Mrs. Campbell made her home with her sister-in-law in Central City. She died at age 87 years on December 6, 1969.

The children of Edwin and Minnie Campbell are: Edith (Eschliman) of Denver, Colorado; Neola (Wray) now a widow living in a rest home in Boone, Iowa; Margaret (Newton-Lott) twice widowed, presently residing in Polk, Nebraska; Mabel, deceased in 1935; Eddra (Waggoner) deceased in 1965 and William of Columbus, Nebraska. Descendants of this pioneer couple number eight grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren.

CHARLES HENRY BITTINGER FAMILY

Charles Henry Bittinger was born in Pennsylvania on November 2, 1845, the second son of Bill and Rebecca Kail Bittinger. On March 9, 1876, he married Anna Margaret Hittle in Fayette, Ohio. She had come west with her younger sister, Sabina, in 1874. She helped Sabina and her husband, Ulysses Persing settle in Lone Tree. Anna then returned to Ohio and married Charles. Charles Henry listed his occupation in the National Census of 1880 as "farmer." Together he and Anna journeyed west by wagon train and arrived in Clarksville in 1877. They homesteaded five miles west of the present town of Clarks on an eighty acre claim. Many fruit trees were also planted on their land.



Charles Henry Bittinger

To their union were born three children. Their first child, Walter Franklin left Clarks and moved to Colorado, where he died in 1958. Otis Allen, their second son, purchased and operated the Clarks Telephone Company for thirty-seven years and was a life-long Clarks resident. On January 1, 1908, he married Fannie Mable Bird of Clarks and two children were born to them. They were Margaret (Mrs. Wayne Palmer of Silver Spring, Maryland) and Vinson of Clarks. Otis died in 1948 and Fanny in 1956. The third child of Charles Henry and Anna Margaret was Mabel Estella who resided with her father after her mother's hospitalization in 1891. Mabel later worked as a Clarks telephone operator. She died in 1956.

Charles Henry Bittinger died on July 11, 1913. Anna Margaret died of pneumonia at age 72, on February 6, 1917. They are buried in the Clarks Village Cemetery.

CHARLES ALFRED BIRD FAMILY

Charles Alfred Bird was born in New York State in 1854. His wife, Jennie Francis Martin, was born that same year in Freeport,

Members of the Charles Bird family, left to right: Fannie, Guy, Jennie, Pearl.

Illinois. The couple were married in the Methodist Church in Clarksville on July 22, 1882. They were the parents of three children all of whom are deceased. Fannie Mabel was born in North Platte, Nebraska, and came with her family to Clarks in 1888. She graduated from Clarks High School in the class of 1903. In 1908, she became Mrs. O. A. Bittinger. The second child of Charles and Jennie was named Guy Elmer. He later moved to Pawnee County, Nebraska, where he died in 1941. Pearl Edith Bird, the last child of the couple, married a fellow-pharmacist named Thomas Keefe. They operated a drug store in Clarks until 1926 when they moved to Long Beach, California. Mr. Keefe died in 1950 and Pearl died in 1972.

DANIEL HAYES FAMILY

Daniel Leo Hayes and Catherine C. Long were married at Saint Michaels Catholic Church in Albion, Nebraska, on February 11, 1920. They lived on a ranch near St. Paul, Nebraska, and later moved to St. Edward and Polk County, Nebraska. They moved to Clarks in 1945 and remained there over twenty years.

In 1936, something new was introduced to the rural community of Clarks. Mr. Hayes read an article about a new type of seed corn that was supposed to produce double yield over the regular corn being planted. He called on the farmers in the community, giving them samples and asking them to try this new corn. The farm people found it to be everything he said it was. In 1937, Dan Hayes became the first Hybrid Seed Corn Salesman in the Clarks area, followed by another young man named Clyde Leece. In 1938, Dan became District Supervisor of the Rob-See-Co Seed Company extending his area to the Colorado border. He hired enthusiastic men to sell this

Dan Hayes, pictured on the left with Clark Williams.

new product, one of those being Clark Williams, who still remains with the company.

The Hayes family later moved to Clarks and bought the Inbody home, which still remains in the family. It was purchased by the Hayes' grandson Michael Bittinger and his wife. The only member of the five Hayes children to remain in the Clarks area is their daughter, Margaret (Mrs. Vinson Bittinger). All the Hayes children, graduates of the Clarks High School, are spread throughout the country. Don and his wife and five children reside in Osceola. He has maintained the home place in Polk County and is also a cattle feeder. Mary Ann lives in Spokane, Washington, with her four children and is a teacher of nursing. Gene and his wife and five children live in Wheatland, Wyoming, and he is president of the Stockgrowers National Bank. Jerry is an electrician and is working at Eastern Washington State College in Ellensburg, Washington.

Mrs. Hayes left Clarks twenty-one years ago, after the death of her husband Dan, in 1953, and was on the staff of a home for boys in Spokane, Washington, for eight years. She was also "house mother" at Washington State University. She retired in June, 1975, and is living with her son Jerry in Ellensburg, Washington.

A nephew of Dan Hayes moved to Clarks in 1974. Robert Hayes is presently teaching in the Clarks Public School.

HENRY PICKREL FAMILY

Henry was born in Missouri in 1877 and journeyed to Fullerton, Nebraska, with his parents while still a small boy. He married Bertha Harrison of Tennessee and a few years later they moved to Clarks. He was a carpenter for thirty-five years until poor health forced him to retire. They were the parents of seven children who attended Clarks school. Bill and Louise presently live in Clarks. Henry died in May, 1947.

J. B. PHILBROOK FAMILY

J. B. and his wife, Emily Porter Philbrook and their three sons came to Clarks from Champaign, Illinois, in 1878. They farmed northwest of Clarks. Of the three sons born to them only one, Fred, survived the many childhood diseases prevalent in those times. An old atlas tells that Mr. Philbrook raised registered shorthorn cattle and duroc hogs. J. B. and Emily were charter members of the Congregational Church. J. B. died in 1907. Many members of Emily's family had also come to Clarks. Her sister, Laura Porter Thompson was also a widow at that time. The two ladies had a large house built in Clarks and boarded teachers and rural high school students. Emily was a teacher and missionary remembered as always being concerned for others. She died in 1926.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Philbrook

J. B. Philbrook, taken in Illinois in the late 1870's.

Melvin and Ada Stanford Ormsby, parents of Alma Philbrook.

MR. AND MRS. FRED PHILBROOK

Fred Burton Philbrook and Alma Ormsby were united in marriage in 1898. With the exception of three years on a ranch in McPherson County, they lived on the family farm until 1925. To this union four children were born — Ralph, Ruth, John, and Hazel. Ralph died of pneumonia at age eighteen, Ruth remains in Merrick County, John is in Seattle, Washington, and Hazel (Rosenberg) lives in Phoenix, Arizona. The farm was sold in 1925 and the family moved to another farm at the north edge of Clarks. At the time of their deaths, Fred in 1957 and Alma in 1958, their residence was a home in Clarks.

M. L. ORMSBY FAMILY

Melvin L. Ormsby and his wife Ada Stanford Ormsby came to Clarks from Wisconsin in the late 1870's. Ada came with her brothers in a covered wagon and Melvin stayed behind to earn money cutting timber during the winter. He followed her to Clarks in the spring. They settled on a farm north of Clarks and in 1881, Alma was born, followed two years later by another daughter, Mae. The family resided on the farm until 1917 when they purchased a house in town and remodeled it. Melvin's hobby was working with bees which he continued even after his retirement. He died in 1922 followed by Ada in 1924. Their first daughter, Alma, married Fred Philbrook. Mae went to Washington to visit relatives and married Joe Gray. She died in 1967.

C. A. Thomas and Maude Thomas

MR. AND MRS. ADDISON J. THOMAS

Addison J. and Anna Thomas came to Merrick County with their family in the year 1897, and they purchased a farm southwest of Clarks. They journeyed from Saline County, Nebraska, where they had lived during most of their youth. Their two sons, Charles A. (Lon) and Ralph H. (Harlie) also spent their active lives engaged in farming. When his parents retired to a home in Central City, Lon Thomas and his wife purchased his parents' farm and resided there until the late 1940's. Of the six children of the two sons, Glen Thomas is the only one who continues to live in this area.

HANS MADSEN KOKJER

Hans Madsen Kokjer was the third child and first son of Soren Madsen Kokjer (1815-1890) and Mette Kristine Hansdatter

Hans Madsen Kokjer family. Left to right: Thomas Edgar, Ralph Leroy, Meta Elizabeth, Hans Madsen Jr., Malina Alice, Harold Emersen, Hans Madsen Kokjer. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

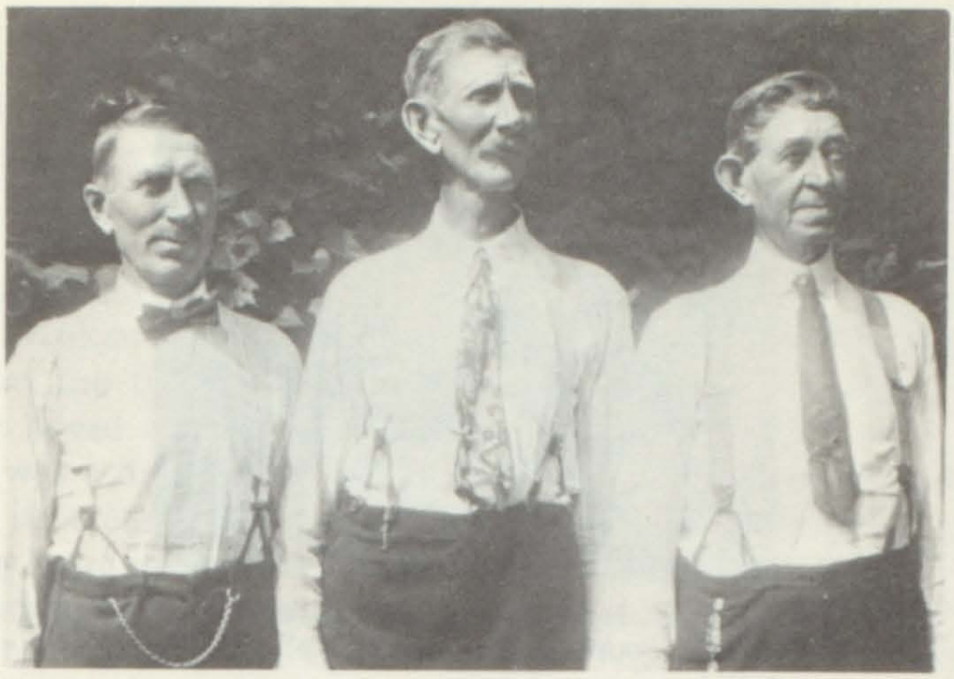
(1827-1901). He was born near Kolding, Denmark, on the farm "Krauthuset" on February 20, 1857, and it was there he received his early education at the village school.

At just seventeen years he left Denmark in the Spring of 1874, sailing from Copenhagen on May the 29th on what he described in a letter to Denmark as "a beautiful calm day." He located at Charlotte, Iowa, with a cousin, Soren Jorgensen, where he was in apprenticeship with a blacksmith, becoming a master mechanic at blacksmithing and wagon making.

In 1879, Hans pushed farther west to what was then Clarksville, Nebraska; here, in company with John Spellman, built a blacksmith shop. After a time he purchased Mr. Spellman's interest. Coming from Denmark in 1883, he was joined at Clarks in business by his two brothers, Madsen and Jordan. Shortly, with the help of his brothers, a fine, new, two-story frame home was erected on the corner of Amity and Isler, then described as being "on the western outskirts of this village."

This home would soon see a family for here at Clarks Mr. Kokjer had become acquainted with Sarah Malina Alice Hartwell, a daughter of the early Clarks pioneers, Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Hartwell. With the arrival of the two brothers from Denmark there came also a wedding dress and on June 26, 1883, Miss Hartwell became the bride of Mr. Kokjer and at their new home five children would grow to adulthood: Meta Elizabeth (Mrs. J. W. Key), Ralph LeRoy, Hans Madsen, Thomas Edgar and Harold Emerson.

Hans continued his mechanic work and blacksmithing until 1894 when he sold his interest in the business to his brother, Madsen.



Left to right: Jordan, Mads, Hans Kokjer, 1930. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

He then worked for the Austin Western Co., Ltd. selling road machinery and a line of contractor's supplies traveling into sixteen to eighteen states every year until he retired in 1915.

Mr. Kokjer was very civic minded and involved in many ways with life in the community. He was elected a member of the first town board and served many years in that capacity. He was a Mason and supporter of the Congregational Church. Early in the 1880's he had an instrumental role in organizing the first "Clarks Cornet Band" who, for many years, with their brass buttoned suits gave a good display of varied music. He was always a constant booster for education attainments and shared "in securing adequate school equipment for the growing city of Clarks" as well as seeing his five children attend the State University at Lincoln. His four sons all saw service during the first World War. For twenty years or more he also helped care for the Nebraska State Fair, being on the State Agricultural Committee.

On February 19, 1920, he suffered the loss of his wife and in 1921 he returned to Denmark for the first time in forty-seven years. His family there wished him to stay but, his thoughts were back at Clarks with his family there and so he left Denmark for the last time and returned to the United States to live out the rest of an active life.

With plans to attend the World Fair in the spring, he went to his brother, Jordan's home in Avoca, Nebraska, in 1932, where he died on the 20th of November. The body was returned to Clarks where final respects were paid, interment was made beside his wife in the Clarks Cemetery.

Written and compiled by
Thomas E. Kelly

Mads Madsen Kokjer, circa 1885. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection.)

MADS MADSEN KOKJER

Mads Madsen Kokjer was born December 13, 1860, near Kolding, Denmark. Here he served three years apprenticeship "with a good house builder and cabinet maker" after the common schooling. He became a master mechanic being very proficient in masonry and woodworking. His expertise is yet proven by fine pieces of furniture that saw his hand, which are now in the homes of various members of the family.

A younger brother of Madsen's, Jordan, had been making plans to go to the United States so he decided he would accompany him. Their older brother, Hans, had already gone to America in 1874 and was now located at Clarks, Nebraska. Jordan had written Hans and he had agreed to take both Madsen and Jordan into the shop at Clarks April 5, 1883. Hans was soon to be married and with John Dustman, Madsen began work on a new home for him, later helping to build several other houses in town. He then became the woodworker for the Kokjer Wagon, Buggy, and Blacksmith Shop.

"In 1893-94, Madsen journeyed by train to see the West, stopping to work near Salt Lake City and various places in California. He came back to Clarks and worked in the shop until he bought his brother's share and established a business of his own — selling farm implements — which he operated in Clarks until his retirement." Those who may recall doing business with him will remember the Danish accent which he always carried. He was called one day to repair a binder and upon seeing it he looked at the owner and remarked, "I tink yu need a noo von."

A young girl from Olathe, Kansas, had been living with her aunt, Mrs. Hans Kokjer and attending Clarks High School, and Madsen became acquainted with her. On August 28, 1901, at Olathe,

Mr. Kokjer was married to Miss Rose DuBois. Mr. and Mrs. Kokjer returned to Clarks where Madsen built a new home. They became members of the Congregational Church of which he became treasurer, a post he held for twenty-eight years being elected to that position for life as a token of confidence and appreciation. He was a member of several other organizations of which he held many offices throughout the years.

Mr. Kokjer was an active member of the Clarks Community serving on the town board for many years and several years on the township board.

He was a member of the Clarks Board of Education for thirteen years as its treasurer. Madsen was a backer of public improvements and many were realized in Clarks because of his efforts.

After an active life and with a clear mind, Madsen Kokjer passed away at his home in Clarks on January 27, 1934. Never returning to his homeland he was interred in the Clarks Cemetery.

Written and compiled by
Thomas E. Kelly

RICHARD KEY — REBECCA CARTER

Richard Key was born to John Key and Elizabeth Daniel(s) at Quarrington in Lincolnshire, England, on October 25, 1836. He was married to Rebecca Carter (born March 30, 1841) and they lived near Quarrington where the first four of their five children — Frederick, Walter, Herbert and Ruth — were born and baptized. After spending the first years of their marriage in England Richard Key took his wife and four small children and left there, arriving at

Left to right: Fred, Herb and Walt Key pictured in front of the granary on the Richard Key homestead.

the town of Clarks sometime around 1880. It was at Clarks that their last child, Rose, was born in 1882.

Clarks became the new home for the family and near there Mr. Key took a homestead and farmed until his death on August 17, 1893. The following notice appeared in the Central City Courier a week later:

> "Died of heart disease, on the 17th inst., Richard Keys. Mr. Keys was apparently in good health and was out in the hayfield all day. He was taken sick in the evening and before a doctor could be summoned he passed away."

Mrs. Key continued to reside in Clarks along with her family until her death on December 5, 1895.

The oldest son, Fred, married Mary Ellen Tobias on March 23, 1898, and they continued to live and farm around Clarks their entire life. The next two sons, Herb and Walt, remembered by many around Clarks as the "Key Brothers," lived together and farmed near the Clarks Cemetery. Roy Church used to bale hay for the Keys and the story is told that one day Roy went down to the Key's farm to do some work when one of the brothers appeared, remarking in his English accent, "Well, Roy, I see you're going to bile some hi tadi!" The two youngest, the girls, will be remembered as Mrs. David Tobias (Ruth) and Mrs. Henry Sims (Rosy).

Written and compiled by
Thomas E. Kelly

THOMAS KEY — ANN SMITH

In the summer of 1838 on August 15 near Quarrington, Lincolnshire, England, a son was born to John Key and Elizabeth Daniel(s). Early life was hard for Tom and he grew to manhood not knowing a father, his having died in 1844 when he was only a young boy. About a month before the tragic Battle of Gettysburg during the Civil War, on June 2, 1863, at the small, ancient, stone country church in Quarrington, England, Thomas Key was united in marriage with Ann Smith (born November 9, 1841, Quarrington), the daughter of John Smith and Elizabeth Collishaw, both of Quarrington. The following year, in 1864, was born their first child, a son, George, and during the following years the remaining children — Mary Jane, Elizabeth Ann, Louisa, Annie, Effie, Minnie and Florrie — were all born in England at Quarrington.

In 1881, the family made plans to leave England for America, possibly because of a beckoning letter from his older brother, Richard, and his family who had gone before. At any rate they left Quarrington and made their way to Clarks in the spring of '81. He and his family settled on a 240 acre farm he had purchased two and

Thomas Key and Ann Smith Key, circa 1885. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

one-half miles southwest of Clarks for $7.00 an acre. A new barn and house were built, a house that eventually saw Mr. Key's death on February 14, 1925.

Mrs. Key had passed on years before on a Thursday evening in 1907 on June 13. She had never been content in America and perhaps the hardships of the earlier pioneer years had taken their toll on her health.

Their last child, John William, was born in America on the farm southwest of Clarks in 1882, about one year after the family had arrived.

Many will remember the fine Hampshire hogs raised by "Will" Key during the years before 1920, when a severe illness forced a slowdown for an otherwise "ambitious and energetic worker." At his sale in Central City on February 20, 1920, $500 was the price paid for one offering with an average of $157.50 for the herd of 35 head. An article in the local paper noted that the sale drew "buyers from five different states."

During the following years Mr. Key's work was done as physical strength permitted; "his farm work was done with great difficulty." After a final illness of three weeks he died on March 26, 1936, at the farm. One hundred sixty acres of the original farm was still owned by his wife, Mrs. Meta (Kokjer) Key in 1976.

Written and compiled by
Thomas E. Kelly

Home of Byard Hamilton and Martha Church northwest of Clarks in 1914. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

Byard Hamilton and Martha Menelva (Marshall) Church, circa 1901. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

BYARD HAMILTON CHURCH — MARTHA MENELVA MARSHALL

Byard Hamilton Church was born in or near Cincinnati, Ohio, a few years before the Civil War on June 23, 1856. He was a younger member in a family of at least ten children; the son of Byard Hamilton Church and Nancy Pitzer, both members of early pioneer families of Brown and Clermont Counties in Ohio.

"Ham" or "Hamilton," as he was known by many, grew up on a farm in Ohio where he received only a meager education. Little else is known of these early childhood years spent in Ohio as he rarely spoke of them.

His parents were poor people and the "call of the West" appealed to them and with Nebraska in mind as their final destination, left Ohio in 1876. Hamilton, along with his parents and some of his brothers and sisters, set out and began the long trek

westward as so many others had already done. The family eventually settled on a homestead near Leigh in Colfax County, Nebraska, and on June 1, 1878, Mr. Church was married to Miss Martha Menelva Marshall, daughter of John W. Marshall and Landora LaRue, at Columbus. She was born October 11, 1860, at Centerville, Iowa, and had arrived in Nebraska only a year or so before alone with her family.

The couple began married life in a sod house on a little forty acre farm he had purchased near Columbus shortly thereafter moving to a farm near Schuyler belonging to his parents. During these years their children, Ella, Emma, Lennie, LeRoy, Charley, Herman and Dorsie, were born. Not seeming to be content and with the spirit of restlessness of all the early pioneers, he loaded his family and a few belongings into a covered wagon and left for the wild Oklahoma Territory sometime in the mid 1890's. It is said that Mrs. Church wanted "to go south where the peaches and pears preserved themselves on the trees." With two of the boys, Roy and Charley, driving the livestock, the family began what was to become a heartbreaking journey. Settling just south of the Kansas border, probably south of Coffeyville, an eighth child was born, Walter Theodore. Here the family's condition seemed to worsen and they were beseiged by a strange fever which left them weak and unable to do their work most of the time. Again the family decided on a move and returned to Nebraska, this time locating for good in 1901, on a farm he had purchased northwest of Clarks. It was during this year their last child, Rollin Leonard, was born.

The restlessness now seemed to be gone and a contentment found, for his obituary says, "He loved his home and could always be found there." And on this place Mr. and Mrs. Church might always be found more often than not entertaining their children and their families as well as their many other friends and relatives. By 1914 they were able to do this in a new house Mr. Church built on their place. Mrs. Church had wanted a large white house like her girlhood home. Their home and family gave them both great joy.

Mr. Church was a great lover of livestock. In his horses he took special pride and always loved a good riding horse. One day he came at a gallop down the road to his place on his horse, racing his son, Dorsie, on another horse. As he turned the corner to come into the yard he seemed to lose his balance and locked his arms around the horse's neck and around it he went two times, finally hitting the ground on his feet. He then exclaimed, "How's that for riding, Roy!" He had ridden even on the day of his death. The weather had been cold and he had been out trying to chip the ice from the water tank. He came into the house that Thursday evening and fell in the kitchen doorway with an armload of wood. By the time Mrs. Church could

The Church Brothers, left to right: Dorsie, Leroy, Walter, and Herman. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

get help he had given up this life. He had died working. His horse stood yet saddled in the yard.

His obituary said something about this man, "While he had not made a great financial success in accumulating wealth, his policy was to owe no man anything."

Grandma Church continued to live on the old place until the time of her death on March 2, 1937, when she was buried beside her husband in the Pierce Chapel Cemetery.

Mr. and Mrs. Church were the parents of ten children, two having died in infancy. A sizeable number of people in and around Clarks today can proudly claim a relationship with this family.

Written and compiled by
Thomas E. Kelly

DORSIE CHURCH FAMILY

Dorsie married Ada Spires and the couple moved to a farm north of Clarks. Five children were born to their union. Three are deceased. The remaining children are Mildred (of Kearney) and Burdette, a carpenter who lives in Clarks and also farms an acreage.

WALTER CHURCH FAMILY

Walter Church and Marie Helen Dickman (born August 14, 1900, of Pleasant Hill Community) were married November 6, 1919, at Central City. They were farmers and spent all their married life in or near Clarks. They were the parents of sixteen children. Their children are: Arnold, of Clarks; Blanche (Mrs. Howard Shively), of Central City; Bernice (Mrs. Lyle Plumbtree), of Belgrade; Forrest, of Clarks, who married Henrietta Gregor; Milford, who died in June of 1945, the result of a truck accident; Melvin (Jack), of Clarks, who married Elva Schmid; Faye (Mrs. Tony Greger), of Central City;

Betty (Mrs. Virgil Gulbrandson), of Stromsburg; Dean, of Clarks, who married Virginia Miller; Donna (Mrs. Eldon Reisener), of Aurora; Harold, of Clarks, who married June Scott; Erma (Mrs. James Miller), of Stromsburg; Sharon (Mrs. Art Lambert), of Stromsburg; Alice (Mrs. Jerry Faeh), of Central City; Twyla (Mrs. Don Kelly), of York; Ronnie, of Central City, who married Linda Solomon.

Walter died on August 4, 1962, of a heart condition. Marie moved into Clarks from their home in Polk County in June of 1966. Descendants of this couple number thirty-three grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

John Campion Family portrait taken Christmas Day, 1906. Pictured are 12 of their 13 children with their husbands or wives and 6 grandchildren.

MR. AND MRS. JOHN CAMPAIN

John Campain was born in Sleafford, England, on January 23, 1846, and left there in 1867 settling in New York. He later settled in Cambridge, Illinois, where he was married to Eliza Middlebrook on May 29, 1875. Eliza was born February 5, 1854. She came from England with her parents at the age of five, and they settled in Humeston, Iowa. In 1876, they moved to a farm near Humeston.

There three children were born, Susan Sarah, Albert W. March and Guy Willard. During the winter of 1879 the family traveled by covered wagon to the vicinity of Clarksville. Susan Campain was only three years old at that time but remembered the hardships of the journey. Ten more children were born to them near Clarks.

In 1901, the couple retired from active farming and moved to Clarks, purchasing the large, two-story house located where the home of the late Ralph Glasser now stands. Five younger children attended the Clarks Public School. Mrs. Campain died on February 25, 1911, from pneumonia. Mr. Campain died in 1930 at age 84.

Their daughter, Susan, married Thomas Burruss in Central City, Nebraska, on December 24, 1895. Thomas Burruss was born in Richmond, Virginia, on April 15, 1861. Together they spent many years on a farm northeast of Clarks. They retired in 1944 and moved to Silver Creek, Nebraska, where Thomas died on May 11, 1945. Mrs. Burruss died in Spaulding, Nebraska, at age 84. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Burruss were the parents of four children: Gladys, Hubert M., Nellie, and Melvin.

PIERCE FAMILY

In 1875, William H. Pierce and his five sons came to Merrick County, Nebraska, and took a homestead. That area is the site of the present Alonzo Ksiazek home. One of his sons, Arthur, was born in Glen Albany, New York, on October 5, 1870. He received his education in the Baird School (District #25). On June 21, 1905, he married Jennie Campain in Clarks and they resided on a farm just east of his father's homestead. They and their six children lived there until 1919 when they moved to Baker City, Oregon. A son was born to them in Oregon. In 1921, the family returned to Nebraska and lived in Havens for one year. Later they moved to a farm in the Pleasant Hill area remaining there until 1936 when they moved into Clarks.

Arthur died on September 23, 1938, and his wife on December 9, 1958. Two of their children reside in Clarks and another lives in Holdrege, Nebraska. Thirteen grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren are their descendants.

MR. AND MRS. FRANK L. WEST

Frank L. West and Jennie C. Dana were married on December 14, 1897, and farmed near Fairfield, Iowa, where Mr. West attended Parsons College. In 1905, they decided to venture westward and sold the Iowa farm to purchase a farm three miles west and one-half mile north of Clarks. They shipped by rail household goods, machinery, and livestock. Many improvements were made on the farm. In 1914,

Mr. and Mrs. Frank West, Clarks, Nebr., 55th wedding anniversary, Dec. 14, 1952.

The first house in the Clarks area to have Delco lights, running water and a furnace. Built in 1914 by Mr. and Mrs. Frank West.

they built a new home which was the first farm house in the county to have hot and cold water, bathroom and electric lights. The electricity was manufactured by their own plant. Their two daughters, Hazel and Mary V., received their elementary education at District #25 school. Hazel and Mary then attended Clarks High School and summer school at Kearney State Teacher's College. The family attended church at Pierce Chapel.

They retired and sold the farm moving into town on March 1, 1919. In 1920, they bought a home on West Amity Street and resided there until their deaths. They became members of the Clarks Methodist Church with Mr. West serving as trustee and church board member for many years. Mr. West later accepted the managership of the Farmers Union Elevator Feed and Coal Company (elevator built in 1909), presently known as the Farmers Cooperative Association Elevator. About 1925, a shed was built and the company secured the dealership for John Deere machinery and commercial feeds. The company was also shippers of livestock. Livestock was shipped by rail to Omaha. Farmers wishing to sell stock and not having enough of their own for a car load would notify Mr. West, who also managed all the bookkeeping for the company. After twenty-five years as manager he retired.

Mr. West was a member of the town board and helped to organize the Bank of Clarks. He held the office of bank president from January, 1937, to June, 1950. He was a Past Noble Grand of Platte Valley Odd Fellow Lodge No. 277 of Clarks, where he served as District Deputy President in 1942. Mrs. West was a Past Noble Grand of Golden Link Rebekah Lodge No. 381 of Clarks and a member of the Women's Society of Christian Service of the Methodist Church.

Mr. West was suddenly stricken with a heart attack and died on April 27, 1954, at 82 years of age. Mrs. West, at the time of her death, age 93, was the oldest Clarks resident. She died on July 5, 1968. Their descendants are Hazel (Mrs. Fritz Dittmer), and Mary Viola (Mrs. H. M. Burruss). Many grandchildren are descendants of this pioneer couple.

MR. AND MRS. HUBERT M. BURRUSS

Hubert M. Burruss was born northeast of Clarks on March 12, 1899. He married Mary Viola West on December 24, 1923, in Osceola, Iowa. During that time Havens, Nebraska, was a thriving community and Mr. Burruss held the position of clerk in the Cecil Layton General Store. From the spring of 1926 to the spring of 1930, Hubert worked at the Farmers Union Elevator Company in Clarks. On March 1, 1930, they moved to their farm one and one-half miles west of Clarks which they had purchased in 1927. In need of other buildings on his place, Mr. Burruss bought a large, hay barn from Mrs. T. L. Dixon. It was attached to the barn which still stands at the home of Miss Clair Dixon. It was then placed on a foundation and presently is still used for hay, grain bins, tool shop and machinery shelter. Mr. Burruss was also a feeder of livestock — hogs, sheep and cattle. For several years he was the leader of the Clarks Junior Stockman Baby Beef 4-H Club. For fifteen years he was a member of the Clarks School Board and served as Treasurer. He was also president of the Bank of Clarks from 1952 until the time of his death. Mr. Burruss was a member of the Methodist church. Hubert Burruss died suddenly in his home, at age 71, from a heart attack, on December 27, 1970. He was buried in the Clarks Cemetery.

J. R. Burruss, their only child, and Charlotte Ann King were married in the Fairview Methodist Church in 1958. They presently reside on the family farm one and one-half miles west of Clarks. Charlotte operated the Cut and Curl Beauty Shop in Clarks. They are the parents of three children.

WILLIAM McLEAN FAMILY

William McLean was born in County Cork, Ireland, on April 6, 1841, and came to Merrick County in the early 1870's. Ten years later he purchased land and owned 560 acres when he died in 1893. He paid $382.75 for the land. He was married to Anna Chesley in 1870 in Illinois, and to their union six children were born. They were: Adelbert, Edna Jane, Elmer Everett, Franklin LeRoy, LaVerne and William Lloyd. Anna Chesley's brother was one of the guards of President Lincoln during the time the president was shot.

Verne McLean is the only one of the family to spend all his life in Clarks. Verne married Mae Hulit of Marshall, Missouri, on April 6, 1910, and recently observed their 66th anniversary. She is a resident of Parkview Home in Central City and Verne resides alone in Clarks. They are the parents of four children, namely Valeta (Graves) of Oregon, Bonnie (Smith) of Oregon, William ("Mac") of Merrick County, and Mildred (Mrs. Raymond Dittmer) of Clarks. Sixteen grandchildren and many great-grandchildren are descendants of this couple. Verne is presently 93 years of age.

THOMAS L. DIXON FAMILY

Thomas Dixon was born in Maine on September 20, 1848. At age fifteen he falsified his age and joined the Army of the North. Five older brothers had been killed and he was determined to serve. He served until the war was over. Years later, after finishing his education he migrated west to Polk County, Nebraska, and taught school. He was County Superintendent there and later married and purchased a farm between Osceola and Clarks where he established a home. He sold the land and moved into Clarks when he realized he did not enjoy farming. In 1880, he built his home in Clarks (which still stands) and started a general merchandise store. Shortly afterwards his wife died. He later married Isabel Kerr who was born in a sod house south of Clarks.

About 1900, fire destroyed the entire block of businesses on the west side of Clarks. Mr. Dixon rebuilt the store building and rented it to William Douglas. Mr. Dixon then served as Deputy County Treasurer for two terms. In those days county officers did not serve more than two terms. Later he was elected to the office of treasurer and served two terms. When he ran for office the second term he received every vote cast except one — a record never before or since achieved. During his eight years in the Court House he drove from Central City to Clarks every Saturday night and returned to Central City every Sunday night. His mode of transportation was a two-wheel cart and his beloved driving horse, Fritzie. After his term of office he returned to Clarks and bought a piece of hay land north of town. He harvested the hay and had it baled and stored in a large barn he built on the home place. He was interested in political affairs and was a staunch Republican. He served on the school board and was a teacher in the Sunday School of the Congregational Church.

The Dixons were the parents of three children, Thomas K., Clair C., Isabelle J., and Marie, who was never legally adopted but was a member of the family. In those days car loads of orphan children were brought west from New York City and offered for adoption. Mr. and Mrs. Dixon drove to Stromsburg and brought one of the girls home to live with them. She knew her name was Marie but did not

know anything else about herself or her parents. There were absolutely no records kept on the orphans. After graduating from the Clarks High School, Marie worked as clerk in the Round House in Council Bluffs until her death in 1964.

During the flu epidemic of 1918, a family, Romme, moved into Clarks. When Mrs. Dixon heard that the mother and several of the children were ill she went out to take care of them. The mother and two of the children died leaving an aged husband and a little girl about four years old. The father asked Mrs. Dixon to care for the little girl and from that day on Helen Romme was a member of the family. She finished high school in Clarks, attended Kearney College for two years and taught in a rural school before her marriage. She now lives in Oregon with her second husband and three children.

Mrs. Dixon served on the Cemetery Board. She and Mrs. Granville Smith and Mrs. Ellsworth Davis were board members for many years. They kept the records and cared for the cemetery. Before every Decoration Day they and other ladies whose husbands were Civil War Vets would meet and fashion wreaths to be placed in the cemetery. These were decorated with flowers on Memorial Day morning. That morning all the little girls of the community were dressed in white and placed on a hayrack and taken to the cemetery to decorate the soldiers' graves.

Mrs. Dixon's health failed to the point where she could no longer care for herself. Her daughter, Clair, resigned her position in the Grand Island school and stayed with her until her death in 1945.

Thomas K. Dixon married Mary Bump and made their home in Big Springs, Nebraska, where they raised a family of five boys and one girl. Years after Mary's death Thomas married Adeline Barry. Before his death in 1974, Thomas owned and operated a drug store in Utica, Nebraska. Isabelle Dixon died in 1945 at the age of 7. Claire C. Dixon presently resides in Clarks.

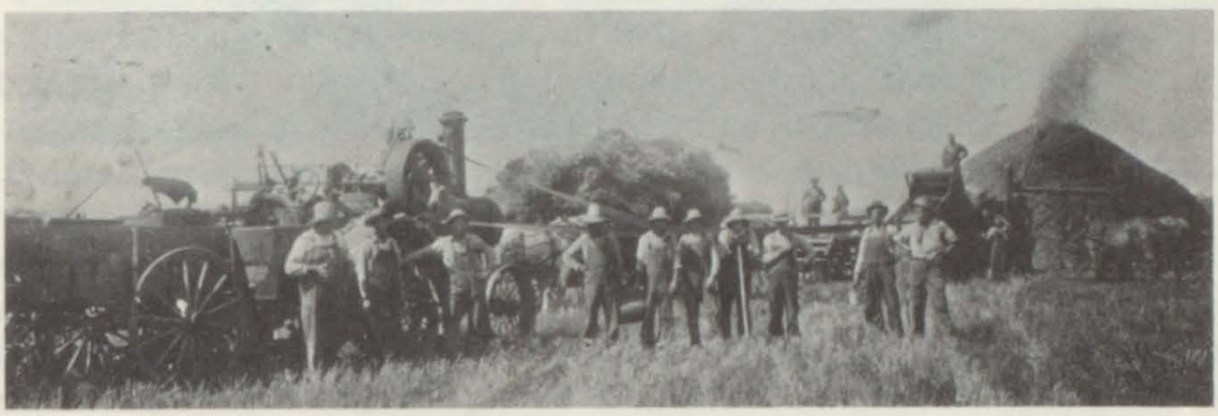
GEORGE STAROSTKA FAMILY

George was born in Tarnow, Poland, on April 15, 1858, and immigrated to America with his mother. He worked for the Union Pacific Railroad and in 1882 purchased 160 acres of prairie, five miles southeast of Silver Creek. He built a sod house where he and his mother lived. His mother made butter and tied it to her back and swam the Platte River. She then walked two miles to Silver Creek to sell and buy staples.

In 1886, he married Mary Smola in Duncan, Nebraska. Five of their eight children were born in a sod house. Three generations lived on the farm. Their son, Leo, was born November 24, 1898. He was united in marriage to Eva Stopak in Krakow on February 1, 1922, and they lived four miles north of Clarks. Three sons were born to

their union, namely Clarence of Clarks, Robert Lee, who works the farm, and William, who is employed at Boys Town. In 1955, Leo and Eva built a house and moved to Clarks where Leo operated a pool hall (present Town Hall site). In 1972, they celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. After a lingering illness, Leo died on December 4, 1975. Eva resides in Clarks and is an active member of St. Peter's Catholic Church.

Leo and Eva Starostka, 50th wedding anniversary photo.



Thrashing at the Charles Starostka farm.

CHARLES STAROSTKA FAMILY

Charles was born in a sod house in Silver Creek, Nebraska, on December 31, 1887. His wife, Elizabeth Dush, was born in Duncan, Nebraska, on July 4, 1886. After their marriage in 1908, they moved to a farm west of the Pleasant Hill School which their four children later attended. The children are: Victoria (Malek) of Columbus, Nebraska; Barbara (deceased); Eddie of Seattle, Washington; and Walter of Columbus, Nebraska. Charles died in 1928. In 1948, Elizabeth married George Fleece and lived on a farm east of Fullerton, Nebraska. Elizabeth moved to Columbus, Nebraska, after his death and presently resides in that city.

JOSEPH ZELAZNY FAMILY

Joseph Zelazny was born in Osceola, Nebraska, and entered into marriage with Katie Starostka of Silver Creek on September 30, 1907. In 1910, the couple moved to an area just north of Clarks and raised their six children. They are: Victoria (Mrs. Adam Stempek) of Duncan, Belle Marie (deceased), Edward of Monroe, Helen (Mrs. Earl Hall) of Duncan, Lawrence of Omaha, and Doris (Mrs. Jerry Jerkins) of Lincoln. The descendants of this couple number thirteen grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren.

ALONZO TOWNSEND FAMILY

Alonzo Townsend came to Merrick County, Nebraska, from New York state in 1880. Alice E. Sims, also a New Yorker, settled on a homestead west of Clarks in 1872 with her parents, William and Catherine (Wyckoff) Sims. Alonzo Townsend and Alice E. Sims were married on April 28, 1882, in Clarksville, by Joseph Buckley, a Methodist minister. They lived on a farm west of Clarks during most of their married live (the place now owned by Mr. Charles Lindgreen). Alonzo and Alice were the parents of four sons: Melvin, Joseph F., Lewis A., and Paul O.

Melvin married June Trullinger of Clarks and was the father of three children. He is presently living in Washington state. Joseph F. died in July, 1969. Lewis A. died in January, 1972. He received his formal education at Merrick County School District #25, graduated from Clarks High School and the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. He also served in World War I. Paul O. Townsend was born March 9, 1896, and died on June 8, 1955. He attended Merrick County District #25 School and was a graduate of Clarks High School. He enlisted in the Army in World War I on July 31, 1917, and while on active duty was wounded in action at Cresancy. He was discharged with honors on June 6, 1919. Paul was married to Viola Madison on July 31, 1929, and together they spent their entire married life in Clarks. They operated a service station and a cafe which was an old Union Pacific Railroad car. Paul retired in 1952. They are the parents of two daughters and one son, namely Lois (Gentry), Bertha (Jording) and Lloyd Paul. Paul Townsend was buried in the Bureau Cemetery northwest of Clarks. Viola Townsend resides in Clarks.

JOSEPH P. COSNER FAMILY

Mr. Cosner was born in Richland County, Ohio, on June 14, 1845. His wife, Sarah E. Frease, was born on July 25, 1851, in Tuscarawas County, Ohio. They were married in Bureau County, Illinois, on September 2, 1868, and were the parents of five children: Mercy Ann (Phelps), Josephine (Crosley), Andre M., Sterling P., and

William H. In December, 1882, they moved to Clarks where they homesteaded seven and one-half miles northwest of town. The homestead was given to William H. Cosner and then given to Mr. and Mrs. Harvey L. Phelps. It is the present residence of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Phelps, who also farm the land. Mr. Larry Phelps is a great-grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cosner.

Joseph P. Cosner and Lincoln Phelps Families pictured at the Cosner homestead.

LINCOLN PHELPS FAMILY

Lincoln Phelps was born in Wisconsin in 1861, and came to Merrick County in 1867 with his parents. His father, Alnathan, died in the tornado of 1871. He was married to Miss Cora Richfield, and they had four children: Gertrude, John Alnathan, William, and Arch. John married Mercy Ann Cosner in 1908, and they were the parents of three children: Ruby (Mrs. Harvey Kuhn), Harvey L., and Harold. Harvey L. married Barbara Schultz and farmed for thirty-four years until he died of a heart attack. They were the parents of two children, Doris Ann (Mrs. Rex Cross) and Larry. Larry and his family presently live on a farm seven and one-half miles northwest of Clarks.

HIRAM MARCUS DEXTER FAMILY

The Dexter family settled in Merrick County when Hiram Dexter, a cowboy for the Goodnight Ranch in Texas, wintered some cattle near Silver Creek. There he met Katherine Amanda James, a

H. M. Dexter Family. Top row, left to right: Lloyd, Claude, Kenneth, Paul. Front row: Dorothy, Hiram Marcus, Cedric, Kathryn (Kate).

Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dexter

school teacher, and was married on August 3, 1882. Her parents operated one of the first grist mills in Silver Creek.

They purchased land north and west of Clarks. Katie and Hiram had six children: Claude, Kenneth, Lloyd, Paul, Dorothy, and Cedric. Kenneth, Paul and Cedric tried ranching in Montana before moving to the west coast to raise their families. Dorothy married Arthur Gregg (both deceased) and farmed in the Clarks vicinity. The oldest of the Dexter children, Claude Marcus, married Pearl Martin and farmed near Clarks. They had three children: Ruth (Mrs. Bob Lutes) of Denver, Colorado; Gerald; and LeRoy, who still lives and farms near Central City. Claude and Pearl were fatally injured in a car accident in 1964. Lloyd Dexter married Mable Martin in 1921 and raised six children. One of their sons, Harold, lives with his family in

Central City. Lloyd purchased the original Dexter home place from his father's estate and farmed and raised his family there. His grandson, Randy (son of Bill Dexter), lives on this farm at present and marks the fourth generation of Dexters to occupy that homestead.

BOYD FERGUSON FAMILY

The Ferguson family came to Merrick County in 1902 when William Boyd moved here from Iowa with his wife Ida and six children: Ethel, Bert, Boyd, Bessie, Leona and Mary. The younger children attended District #25 School which was one mile south of their farmland. In 1911, the family moved one and one-fourth miles north of District #37 near Chapman.

William Boyd and Ida Ferguson

Bert married Flora Boettner in 1913, and returned to the Pierce Chapel area residing just west of the church. Their children are: Harold, Ralph, Edith (Mrs. Marion Zachary), Carl, Glen, Mary (Mrs. Ted Dittmer), and Earl. Harold, Ralph, Carl and Glen all farmed in the Clarks area. Glen Ferguson is the only descendant currently farming in this area. Boyd married Ella Raecke in 1915 and lived west and south of the church. Their children are Elvira (Mrs. Gerald Dexter) and Dorothy Ella, who died in the flu epidemic of 1918. In 1923, he married Pearl Wait and had two sons, Lester and George. Elvira and her husband also remain in Merrick County. The Ferguson family have all been active in the Methodist Church. Ethel married Irving Costell and moved to California, Bessie married Lawrence Bice and moved to Wyoming, and Mary married Harold Myers (Rhode Island).

FREDRICK MARTIN FAMILY

Fredrick Martin and Nettie Nisbet were the parents of five children. He died in 1903 leaving Pearl, Henry, Lulu, Mabel and Irene fatherless. In 1911, Pearl married M. C. Dexter and the family came to Merrick County making their home with the Dexters. Dexter children are Gerald, LeRoy, and Mrs. Ruth Lutes. Lulu married Ralph Rose and they have a daughter, Mrs. Pauline Johnston. Henry married Orabelle Cruckshank and had four children: Marjorie (Mrs. Loys Rowen), Mrs. Lois Harwell, Mrs. Maxine Lewis and Darwin. Mabel Martin married Lloyd Dexter. Their children are: Donald, Robert, Marian, Bill, Harold and Dorothy (Mrs. Don Kucsynski). Irene Martin died in 1929.

Walter Chamberlain, circa 1919, pictured in front of the bank with his prize race horses.

WALTER CHAMBERLIN, SR.

Walter Chamberlin, Sr. was born in Iowa. He and his teacher wife, Mary Elizabeth (Tracy), came to Clarks in 1889 and established the Merrick County Bank. He was associated with his brother, Henry, who managed the Wood River Bank. Walter took charge of the Bank at Clarks. For forty years he was principle stockholder and manager. In due time a charter was signed under the State Bank of Clarks. Later a new charter was adopted. The bank was then known as the First National Bank of Clarks.

Walter was a successful breeder of driving horses and installed the first electric light plant of the town. He died in Seattle, Washington, on December 17, 1930, and his body was brought back to lay in state in the Bank of Clarks for a mourning period. His funeral was held at the Clarks Congregational Church and burial was in the Clarks cemetery.

Doctor Douglas

DOCTOR ROBERT R. DOUGLAS

A native of the community in which he served for fifty-six years, Robert Raymond Douglas was born in Clarks on May 28, 1889, the son of Robert R. and Anna J. McCarthy Douglas. He received his education in Clarks completing high school in the class of 1907. In 1911, at the age of twenty-one he graduated from Creighton University College of Medicine. He interned for one year at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, where he met a registered nurse, Mary Olive Moulton. They were married on November 12, 1913, in Wessington Springs, South Dakota. Dr. Douglas intended to start his practice in Des Moines but altered his plans when his father, (who was postmaster in Clarks) suffered a stroke. The doctor decided to return home for a short time to care for his father. At the end of the first year when his personal affairs were in order he was enjoying his association with the people and sensed their appreciation. As he often said, "These people are not only patients but my personal friends, really fine people."

Mrs. Douglas accompanied her husband by horse and buggy on his house calls and spent much time helping him in his office. Dr. Douglas hastened to help those in need at any time of the day or night. If necessary he would often stay overnight at a farm while treating a seriously ill patient or awaiting a birth. He assisted at the birth of over 2,000 babies and in some instances the birth of entire families — father, mother and children. He took great pride in delivering his own children, grandchildren, and great-grandson, Gerald Robert Schmidt.

In 1953, the Clarks community honored him with an appreciation night highlighted by a "baby" parade and several salutes for his outstanding community service. In 1961, he received a citation from the National Foundation of the March of Dimes for more than twenty years of volunteer leadership. He "covered" the town personally in 1938 and collected $35. Ten years later after a local boy was seriously ill with polio, the community raised $1,800. Through his work everyone in the community had the opportunity to receive the full series of Salk vaccine injections. He received the AK-SAR-BEN Good Neighbor plaque and pin and the Nebraska Medical Association also honored him for fifty years service.

In his youth the doctor enjoyed playing baseball and golf and in later years when he could not actively participate he was an avid spectator. He was a lifetime member of St. Peter's Catholic Church and enjoyed membership in Third and Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus, Merrick County, Nebraska. He and Mrs. Douglas were members of the Clarks Lions Club for many years. Dr. Douglas was the father of three children, namely Robert Raymond Douglas III, who died at the age of seventeen months, the late Phillip Francis Douglas, and Doris Ann (Mrs. Walter Cremeen), presently of Grand Island, Nebraska. Five grandchildren shared this special man's affection. They are: Claudia Cremeen Schmidt, Jean Creemen Saathoff, Douglas Cremeen, Phyllis Douglas Redd, and Mary Douglas Svoboda.

In 1968, at the age of 79 years, Dr. Douglas was being taken to the hospital as a patient but the telephone rang and he stopped at his office to help that one last patient in need. Dr. Douglas was truly a family doctor in the finest and most significant meaning of the term.

JOSEPH R. YOUNG FAMILY

Joseph Young was born in 1861 in Springfield, Indiana, the son of Scottish parents. He married Sarah Ida Jewell in 1892, and they came to Clarks that same year. They farmed north of Clarks, where Robert Divine now lives, until 1908 when they moved into Clarks. Mr. Young was in poor health and Mrs. Young became a seamstress. They were the parents of four girls and one boy who all graduated from the Clarks High School.

ANTRIM-SHEPHERD FAMILY

Among the adventuresome young men to come "Out West" to investigate the possibilities in the Merrick County area was George Edward (Ed) Antrim, a native of Clinton County, Ohio, but a resident of Marion County, Iowa. He arrived in the late 1870's after having driven his team and wagon down into Missouri and then out to Custer County, Nebraska. For a time he was employed to "break prairie" with a sodbreaker plow which had been specially designed to turn the native grass sod into tillable farm land.

He returned to Iowa but the flat productive prairie land continued to intrigue him and he again left the hill farm country of his forebearers. He brought his new bride to the Clarks-Silver Creek area to begin farming for himself.

In 1892, he and his wife, Linnie, operated a hotel in Clarks at the northwest corner of the intersection of George and Millard Streets. Managing both the hotel and the farm proved too strenuous, even with a reliable hired hand on the farm and they returned to the land.

In 1898, he purchased an undeveloped quarter section northeast of Havens which was bisected by the Union Pacific Railroad. He built a farmstead near the road along the north side of the farm and turned much of the prairie into cultivated fields. In 1907 he sold this place to Mrs. Reimers, a widow, who lived in Iowa. The following spring, her son-in-law, Herman Strohbehn and his wife, Anna, with their two children, Lillie and Walter, moved onto it. They soon purchased another quarter section adjoining it on the west from Will Mockridge, who lived with his parents on the farm just west of Havens. Mrs. Strohbehn at 96 still lives in the same house. Her daughter and husband, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Jacobsen, now retired, occupied another house in the farmyard. Their son, Donald, is a third generation operator on the land.

In 1908, the Antrims purchased the place just south of the farm they had sold. It had long been Mr. Antrim's desire to own this particular piece of land.

When the Antrim's retired in 1919 they bought a home in Clarks where they lived until their deaths. They sold the farm to their only daughter, Etta Viola and her husband, Chas. F. Shepherd, who had two daughters, Rose (Mrs. Frank Betts) and Opal (Mrs. Clinton Colby). The girls received their elementary education at District 40, the same school their mother had attended and to which later, Mrs. Colby's daughters, Carolee and Betty, were sent.

The Shepherds lived on the same farm for forty-seven years with the exception of the period from 1936-1938, during the drought and depression, when they operated a grocery store in Havens.

Etta Shepherd at 86, widowed since 1960, still lives alone in the house in Clarks to which the couple retired when they left the farm.

Mr. Shepherd, also an Iowan, had a dual heritage. His grandfather, Solomon Shepherd, a veteran of the Civil War had come to Nebraska after his son John had been apprenticed at age thirteen to William Cool of Cumberland, Iowa. It was a common practice in those days for a family with no sons to take one from a family with several boys. John married the Cool's daughter, Caroline, and they came to Nebraska after their first son, Chas. Forest, was born. The rigors of pioneer life on a sandhill farm east of Silver Creek so appalled Grandpa Cool that while on a visit to Nebraska he persuaded the young family to return to Iowa.

It was as a young man that Chas. came to Silver Creek the winter of 1908-09 to help care for his aged Grandfather Shepherd. After Solomon Shepherd's first wife, the former Ellen Green, died (she is buried in Duncan, Nebraska) he married a widow, Sarah (Fox) Posegate, who had grown children. They lived in the village of Silver Creek. Chas. began to woo a girl he had met on an earlier visit, Etta Antrim, the close friend of his cousin, Rose Shepherd. They were married in 1910 and lived the first three years in Iowa before being drawn back to Nebraska and the farm near Havens.

The friendship of the Antrim and Shepherd families began in their earliest years in the area, beginning a saga that no one could possibly have foreseen at the time.

TUNKS-BETTS FAMILY

Theodore (T. D.) Betts and his wife, the former Laura J. Porter, with their only son, Klar A., arrived in Mead Township, Merrick County, from Bryan, Ohio, in the early 1880's. Too late to get a homestead, they rented a farm complete with equipment and livestock on a share basis from a Mr. Reynolds who was retiring. Mr. Betts became a cattle feeder and later purchased his own farm and established a breeding herd.

On June 18, 1902, Klar Betts married Ethel Tunks, one of the daughters of Albert and Belle (Martin) Tunks, who had homesteaded in the same area which was destined to become the Pierce Chapel community. Both of them had attended college, he at Midland in Fremont, she at Kearney State Teacher's College. They taught at rural schools in the vicinity before and after their marriage.

Mr. and Mrs. Betts lived one-half mile west of the Bureau Cemetery on the south side of the road. Here their two sons were born, Roy L. and Frank Klar.

Klar Betts died August 13, 1914, when a bolt of lightning struck the barn in which he and some neighbors had sought refuge

from a thunderstorm. Mrs. Betts then moved into Clarks with her young sons.

She married Jay Richards on October 31, 1917, and moved to his home in Nance County. Her son, Frank, lived with his paternal grandparents and finished his elementary education in District #33. When he was ready for high school he moved to the home of his maternal grandparents, who had retired to Central City. In March, 1922, T. D. Betts, whose wife had died, moved with his grandsons to a farm he owned a mile east of the Clarks cemetery and died a month later. Frank stayed on the farm and for more than fifty years continued to operate the original farm as cattle feeder.

It was in 1973 that he retired from farming and a few months later sold the farm. Mr. Betts and his wife, the former Rose (Shepherd) Colby, now live in Clarks as they have since their marriage September 15, 1965. Dwain Betts, son by a former marriage, still resides on the farm in the house where he was born.

FRED KOHL FAMILY

Fred Kohl was born in Germany on September 19, 1864. Anne Elizabeth Amacher, his wife, was a native of Switzerland. They journeyed to America at an early age. In 1889, they located on a farm northeast of Clarks and five children came to bless their home. They are: Emma (deceased), Margarete (deceased), Walter, Mary and Anna (deceased). Their farm has been in the Fred Kohl family for eighty-one years. Their daughter, Mary, married Ed Arney and they purchased the farm in 1938. They resided there until Ed's death in 1970.

Anna Kohl died in 1931 and Fred in 1948.

Wedding picture of Fred Kohl and wife, Anna Amacker on April 10, 1904.

Mr. and Mrs. John Kohl, Sr. and daughter, Dora, and William, Sr.

Wedding picture of Mr. and Mrs. William Kohl Sr., 1906.

JOHN KOHL SR. FAMILY

John was born on June 30, 1857, in Germany and came to America at age 23 with his brother, Fred. In 1881, they settled in Chicago, Illinois, and lived there a short time. John then sent for his German-born wife, Anna Frahm Kohl and daughter, Dora (Dankelsen). Together the family traveled to Minden, Iowa, where William Sr. was born on February 8, 1882. At the age of nine, William and his parents and sister moved to Columbus, Nebraska. Two more sons were born, namely John Jr. (born 1886, died 1919) and Herman Sr. (born 1893, died 1965). The growing family then moved to Richland, Nebraska, and resided on a ranch for five years before moving to Genoa. In 1894, the Kohls moved to a farm northeast of Clarks which is presently known as the W. H. Kohl Jr. farm. Anna died in 1938 at 84 years of age. John Kohl Sr. died in 1949 at the age of 91 years.

On March 28, 1906, William Kohl Sr. married Katherine Hansen. The couple lived on the Kohl farm until 1943. They were the parents of eight children, namely Arthur of Clarks, Martha (Darnall, deceased), Bettie (Monson) of Clarks, Elsie (Grosch), Bessie (Peterson) of Clarks, William H. Kohl Jr. (mayor of Clarks), John J., and Pauline (Hemmer).

In March, 1943, Mr. and Mrs. William G. Kohl, Arthur, John and Pauline moved into Clarks to the home then known as the William Schawger residence which is presently owned by Fred Gerber. The following year the family purchased the H. P. Hansen

home, now owned by Richard Wruble. William Kohl Sr. and Arthur presently reside in the home they purchased from the George Dudneys. William Kohl is 94 years of age.

HERMAN KOHL SR. FAMILY

Herman came to Clarks in 1894 at one year of age. He attended District #7 School. In 1913, he married Stella Hipke and they farmed three miles east of Clarks for the next fifty-two years. They were the parents of three children, namely Herman Jr. of Clarks, Alice (Fredrickson) of Stromsburg, and Charles J. of Clarks. In 1963, the couple celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Herman died in 1965 and the following spring Stella moved into Clarks where she presently resides.

Their son, Charles Kohl, and his wife of thirty-six years, Mary, presently live on the farm three miles east of Clarks. Charles also attended District #7 school where his children received their elementary education. They are the parents of four children. Robert C. presently living in Shelby, Nebraska; Gerald H. who died in a car accident in 1969; John C. of Linwood, Nebraska; and Margaret (Furby) residing in Fullerton, Nebraska. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kohl have eight grandchildren.

CHARLES HIPKE FAMILY

Charles was born in New Holstein, Wisconsin, in 1863 and traveled with his parents by covered wagon to Nebraska. In 1883, in North Bend, he married Lena Mitchell. In 1900, they farmed north of Havens. To their union six children were born. They were: Zerrell, Roy, Stena, Stella, Elze and a child who died in infancy. Stella (born 1893) was educated at District #40 School. In 1920, Charles and Lena Hipke and family moved to Clarks and built a new home. The house is now occupied by Darlene Dankelson and family. Charles worked in the John Ferguson store and later owned his own produce business. He died in 1924. Lena died in 1947.

MICHAEL SHONSEY FAMILY

"Mike" was born in Montreal, Canada in 1866, the second of six children. His family moved to Marion County, Ohio, and later to Wyoming. From 1880 until the spring of 1888, he was foreman for the Guthrie, Hord and Company cow outfit. He held other jobs as foreman for various cattle companies before coming to Central City in 1893. There he was associated with the T. B. Hord Cattle and Grain Company. About 1895, in connection with Mr. Hord, he purchased the Howard Crill Ranch, commonly known as the old Guthrie ranch. Mr. Shonsey resided there. The ranch was known as

the Wells and Hord Cattle Company until 1906 when it became known as the Hord and Shonsey Cattle Company. The location of the ranch was near Clarks and included an area of 1,700 acres of deeded land. The company also maintained an elevator in Clarks. They were engaged in the grain business also, and fed about 2,000 head of cattle per year.

Mr. Shonsey was married to Olive Sisler and they were the parents of four children. Their son, Harold, died in the flu epidemic of 1918. Harold and his wife, Ethel Grimes (deceased), were the parents of two sons, John of Omaha and Tom of Denver. Mike and Olive's second son, Michael Gerald, died in 1974. He and his wife, the former Hazel Campbell, had one daughter, Mrs. Rex Fowler of Colorado and one son, Michael who presently farms the home place at Clarks. Margaret, only daughter of Mike and Olive, is now Mrs. Schuyler Masters of Omaha. She is the mother of two sons, Tom (deceased) and Robert of Omaha. Tom Shonsey, the youngest child, was killed in action during World War I and is buried in France. Olive Shonsey died in 1907 and Mike later married Hannah Harris of Central City. Mike Shonsey, a pioneer personality of Clarks, died in 1954.

SWEET FAMILY

On October 17, 1895, Alfred Sweet married Sarah Sharman who had come from England with her family five years before. Alfred had come from Cincinnati, Ohio, with his aunt and uncle, the Franklin Sweets.

Alfred and Sarah established their first home on the old "Ormsby" farm. On November 25, 1897, the family moved to the farm one-half mile west and two miles north of Clarks. They purchased this land for $17.50 an acre.

Their children still remember the excitement of the steam engine thresh machine, that big engine, belching black smoke, came into the yard pulling the separator behind it. Neighbors came with teams, wagons, and forks to haul bundles, pitch them into the machine, and to haul away the threshed grain.

Milk, cream and butter were kept cool in the well. The Sweet ice house was built around the windmill tower and during the winter, ice from the stock tank was packed in with straw and sawdust.

In these days of so much dry weather, it is hard to realize that from about 1902, their crops drowned out for seven consecutive years, except on a few knolls.

Ten children were born into the Sweet family. In 1907, one child, Lucy Fern, ten and one-half months old, died of pneumonia. Four years later another child, Eddie, eleven years old, died from after effects of measles.

Wedding picture of Sarah Sharman and Alfred Sweet, October 17, 1895.

Haying was probably the family's happiest time of all except when an occasional bumblebee's nest was disturbed. Frank was the main hay sweeper in the family. Ellen remembers taking cold pump water to the field in jugs wrapped in wet sacks and putting a little ginger and vinegar in one jug as it was a bit more appetizing when warm than plain water.

The children attended the McLean school on the same section as their farm until 1910 when the land was transferred to Clarks School District #11. Florence, Alice, Ethel and Ellen each took Normal Training for prospective teachers. They began their teaching career in a rural school.

The family raised cattle, hogs, and poultry of all kinds, but sheep raising and feeding became the most profitable. In 1918, a 100 foot long barn was built to house them.

The Sweets purchased their first automobile in 1915 — a red Oldsmobile.

In 1923, Alfred Sweet died. His sons kept up the farm work. Mrs. Sweet died in 1942.

All four girls taught school. Ethel still teaches in Lincoln, Nebraska, but claims the farm at Clarks as home. Florence (Mrs. E. T. Morgan) lives near South Sioux City, Nebraska, as does Alice (Mrs. Paul Hirschbach). Joe died in 1959 and in 1972 Frank died. Frank's wife, Veda, lives on their farm northwest of Clarks. Al now farms the

home place. George moved to Clarks. He is now a state instructor of Emergency Medical Technician Ambulance Training. Ellen Sweet Sloan presently lives in Wisner, Nebraska.

There are now ten families of Sweet relatives at Clarks, and eight at South Sioux City, making 92 living members in all. (In-laws are included in this count.)

(NELS) ALBERT STROMBERG FAMILY

Albert Stromberg was born in Varna, Illinois, on February 5, 1872. His mother died when he was five years old and his sister Selma was three years of age. They moved with their father to Polk County on a farm eight miles southeast of Clarks. In 1898, he married Hildur Samuelson of the same community. They were members of the Lutheran faith.

Albert used to tell of his experiences as a boy going to Clarks with his father (Charlie Stromberg) to haul grain and buy supplies.

They were the parents of five children: Violet (Anderson) of Stromsburg, Richard who died at the age of five years, twin boys Clyde and Claude of Clarks, and Evelyn (Miller) of Clarks.

Hildur (Stromberg) died in 1925 while her family was quite young. Albert worked out as a farm labor man and made his home with his children. In 1937, Albert and his son Clyde began farming west of Clarks on the farm now owned by Deryel Beck. He retired due to poor health.

His eldest daughter, Violet (Mrs. Norris Anderson), retired and still resides on the farm southwest of Stromsburg. They have five children: Richard, Paul, Rodney, John and Jane.

Albert's son, Claude Stromberg, and his wife Frances (Branting) have farmed in the Clarks vicinity since 1937. They moved to Merrick County during the drought with their children. They sold Grade A milk and farmed. They retired in 1974 and moved to Clarks. They are the parents of six children: Doris (Mustard), Virginia (McCullough), Merle, Loretta (Wessels), Dale and Alberta (Ellis).

In 1938, Clyde married Emma (Pickeral). They continued to farm, later moving to a farm they purchased seven miles southeast of Clarks. They are the parents of five children: Nancy (Rice), Gayle, Leon, Carol (Sagehorn), and Suzette (Meerkatz).

ARTHUR MILLER FAMILY

Arthur Miller, son of Lew and Lucy Miller, was born in Polk County near Osceola, Nebraska. His wife Evelyn (Stromberg) was born near Stromsburg, Nebraska. After their marriage, they lived on a farm near Oto, Iowa, for five years. Then they moved near Clarks, Nebraska, in 1937 with their children Bonnie and Ronald. They lived

Mr. and Mrs. Art Miller, Bonnie and Ronald.

on the Lavell farm northwest of Clarks (now owned by Clarence Wemhoff) six years. They then moved east of Clarks on the Gerber farm. They bought a farm seven miles northeast of Clarks known as the Harmon farm and moved there in 1948, which is their present house. They have retired and their married son, Ronald, lives on and farms the place.

Arthur is a charter member of the Rural fire board and served as vice-president one year and president fifteen years. He resigned and his son, Ronald, was elected and has served the past six years.

Arthur also served on the Farmers Co-op board for several years during the building of the new station.

The Miller family are members of the Clarks United Methodist Church. Ronald married Peggy (Ficken) formerly of Marshall, Oklahoma. They are the parents of four children: LouAnne, David, Gloria and Deborah.

The Miller's daughter, Bonnie, married Morris Garretson and lives in Central City, Nebraska. They are the parents of six children and two grandchildren.

MR. AND MRS. CLAUDE STROMBERG

Claude was born south of Clarks, the son of Albert and Hildur (Samuelson) Stromberg. Doctor Phlippon of Stromsburg assisted in the birth of Claude and his twin brother, Clyde.

Mrs. Claude Stromberg (the former Frances Branting) was born in Clarks to Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Branting. Claude and Frances have lived in the Clarks community over forty of the forty-nine years of their marriage. They have raised six children and their descendants number twenty-four grandchildren and fourteen great-grandchildren. They presently reside in the house on West Amity Street formerly owned by Claude's grandfather.

Dr. Shaw Little once remarked that he had done dental work for five generations of the Strombergs.

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Stromberg

Mr. and Mrs. Pete Stromberg

PETE OSSIAN ALVIN STROMBERG

Pete grew up on a farm six miles south of Clarks. In 1936, he and his wife, Florence (Rodine), and six children moved to Clarks. The children are Hollis, Marvin, Wayne, Jeanette, Darlene and Joyce.

Pete was employed at the Farmers Oil Station-Farmers Cream Station and was Clarks school janitor for eighteen years. In 1968, he and Florence celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Florence died in July, 1973, and Pete is living at his residence on East Amity Street, Clarks.

SPIRES FAMILY

Fredrick Kingsley Spires was born in England in 1862. He married Sarah Elizabeth Pentlow there, and the couple journeyed to America to farm and raise cattle. They lived north of Clarks and then moved to the north edge of town on the place occupied by Linnie Hoffer.

They were the parents of six children. Ada married Dorsie Church. Robert was a veteran of World War I, who married Nettie Ernst of Columbus after his return from the service. They were engaged in farming until his retirement in 1952. Later they moved into their home which is now occupied by the Tom Spires family. Robert and Nettie were the parents of eight children, all of whom attended the Clarks Public School. Three children presently live in Clarks: Tom, Eileen and Dennis. Robert butchered for many years for many people and died in 1963. His wife, Nettie, died one month later.

CAMPBELL BROTHERS

Brothers George R. and Robert Campbell were born in Indiana and came to Clarks from Colorado. During the years 1900-1901 they built a two story, brick building on the corner in Clarks. This store was known as Campbell Brothers. It was a real attraction similar to a large shopping center. Two floors were filled with general merchandise, men and women's clothing, groceries and an excellent china department. Six to eight men and women were employed there. After the building was completed, George R. sent for his wife and two children, Hazel and William. They arrived on the Union Pacific train from Denver and made their home in Clarks.

Mrs. George Campbell was born in England, the former Martha Stone. Together they were the parents of four children: Hazel (now Mrs. Shonsey, a widow living in Central City), William (deceased in 1970), Helen (Mrs. Roy Turner of California) and G. Robert Campbell, presently residing in San Francisco, California. All of the Campbell children attended the Clarks Public School.

In later years George Campbell used the upstairs of the building as a dance hall. Many well-known orchestras appeared there.

Portrait of the William Burger family.

WILLIAM BURGER FAMILY

In 1893, Callie Gula Black purchased 160 acres of land one-half mile east and one and one-half miles south of Pierce Chapel Church. The land is now owned by her grandson, Jack D. Burger. Her daughter, Josie and son-in-law, Will Burger later purchased 240 acres one-half mile north of her place. As they could finance only 200 acres they sold the remaining land to Jake Inbody. In 1901, Josie and Will Burger and their two small children, George and Margaret, left Rogers, Nebraska, and resided in the house now owned by Ethel

(Bobbie) Burger Grafe. It was then a two-room, rat-infested house last used for a dance hall. The original house remains part of the present home of Mrs. Grafe. Five other children were born to Josie and Will, namely Genivive, Alnetta, Ethel, and twins Jack D. and Doris. Doctor Douglas enjoyed telling the story that Mr. Burger fainted when he told him his wife had given birth to twins! The family attended Pierce Chapel Church regularly and the children were students at Pleasant Hill School.

Ethel (Bobbie) Burger Grafe recalls, "We were all taught to milk and our mother churned as much as sixty pounds of butter a week. It was then exchanged for groceries and other necessities. My father often told us that one Saturday afternoon when they had gone to town and bought what they needed, they had only a nickel left. Mother loved ice cream, so that was exactly what they purchased for the nickel. My father raised hogs which he called 'mortgage lifters,' they enabled us to have our own meat. We had canned beef for summer use and Dad cured and smoked his own pork for our family and some of the neighbors also. I can remember helping mother make our own soap in a big, black, iron kettle from the tallow and meat fryings we saved. I remember picking geese and duck's feathers for pillows and feather ticks for all the beds. All the floors in our home were varnished each spring. My father had a huge garden and orchard so the cellar or cave was filled each fall with hundreds of quarts of fruits, vegetables and meats. We also stored potatoes and cabbages. A special treat in late winter was squab pie. We also had ducks and geese to eat. They would set down on the ponds in the lower pastures where the wild rabbits were abundant."

"Father served on the Pleasant Hill School Board for many years as well as the Bureau Cemetery Board. He and Frank Rose and other neighbors were responsible for taking care of the cemetery and digging the graves. Jack Herbert, a bachelor, did the mowing for many years. Our aunt, Georgia Black, lived in our home adding a great deal of love to our growing-up years. She and my parents are buried in the Bureau Cemetery, a part of the community they loved."

Of the seven Burger children, George is deceased; Margaret is now Mrs. Kent Parker of San Diego, California; Genivive is Mrs. Harold Wegner of Salem, Oregon; Alnetta is Mrs. Lynn Moomey of Lincoln, Nebraska; Jack D. resides in Silver Creek, Nebraska; Doris is Mrs. Glen Moody of Salem, Oregon; and Ethel is Mrs. Don Grafe of Clarks.

HERMAN HOLM FAMILY

Herman Holm was born in Tellingstedt Province Schleswig-Holstein, West Germany, in 1869. At the age of eighteen he came to the United States. He attended night school in San Francisco to learn

Wedding picture of Herman Holm and wife Clara Haase on October 22, 1900.

the English language. He lived on the West Coast until 1895 when he came to North Bend, Nebraska, to visit a friend from his native country. It was here that he met his future bride, Clara.

Clara Bettiene Haase was born in Davenport, Iowa, in 1871. She came to Nebraska in a covered wagon with her parents when she was ten years old.

Clara and Herman were married on October 22, 1900, and came to Clarks in 1901. They made their home one and one-half miles west of town for a short time before buying a farm east of Clarks (where the Ronald Glassers now live) which was their home until their deaths.

Six children were born to them. The first child, William, died at birth. The surviving five children all attended the District #7 School and were graduated from Clarks High School.

It was the custom in those days to give a stranger who might come to the door food and overnight lodging in the barn. Herman was a very hospitable man and invited such a stranger to stay in an upstairs bedroom. The next morning when Herman called him, he was gone but he had left behind a blood-stained silk shirt. It was learned that the overnight guest was the notorious gun slinger, Pat Crowe.

Twenty-five cows were milked by hand each morning by the three Holm sons before going to school. Fresh cream was sold to the Douglas Store. Mrs. Holm churned butter and with a special printing paddle decorated each pound of butter before selling it.

Herman died on May 28, 1938, and his wife died five weeks to the day and hour after his death. They are buried in the Pierce Chapel Cemetery.

A son and daughter now live in the neighboring area. Carl, married to Lucy Carlson, make their home near Silver Creek, and Birdie, married to Warren Tucker, lives in Central City.

JIM McDANIEL FAMILY

Jim was born in 1860 in the state of Georgia and married a New Yorker, Katie Hentges in Wahoo, Nebraska, in 1881. They moved to a farm west of Clarks. There they lived for a short time before returning to Saunders County.

In 1917 a daughter, Maggie, and her husband, Gus Roumpf, moved onto the farm and presently reside there. Mr. and Mrs. Roumpf celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary in 1972. They are the parents of four sons, namely: George who lives with his mother on the farm, Raymond (deceased), Lawrence a retired minister, and August of Omaha, Nebraska. Gus died in 1973 at the age of 90.

SCHULTZ FAMILY

Henry and Louise Gorgen moved from North Bend, Nebraska, in 1903 to a farm north of Clarks, which they sold to Ed Hunscote in 1911. Several of the Gorgen children remain in the Clarks vicinity. Catherine (Katie) Gorgen married Gus Schultz in 1906. He was born in 1865 in Germany and came to Nebraska in 1866. Several years before his marriage he purchased a farm northwest of Clarks. The couple started farming and continued to live on the same farm all their lives.

To this union eight children were born: Caroline (Mrs. Elwyn Craig), Henry, Frank (deceased), Clara (Mrs. Don Graves), LeRoy, Barbara (Mrs. Harvey Phelps), and Irene and Raymond who live in Texas. Gus died in 1934 and Katie in 1971.

Mr. and Mrs. U. Clark at left with their neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Wahl.

URIAH ("BOB") CLARK FAMILY

Mr. Clark and Mary Etta Van Wey were united in matrimony at Osceola, Nebraska, on April 23, 1891. In 1920, they moved to a farm west of Clarks and spent most of their married lives in the Clarks and Silver Creek communities. To this union six children were

born: Eva (deceased), Wayne (deceased), Bernice (deceased), Earl (deceased), Beulah presently living in Beatrice, Nebraska, and Bertha of Redding, California. In 1941, Uriah and Mary Etta celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at their farm joined by relatives, neighbors and friends.

Martin and Mabel Monson and daughters, Erma and Goldie, 1941, child is Jerry Clark.

MARTIN MONSON FAMILY

Martin Monson was born in Litchfield, Minnesota, in 1872. His parents were from Stockholm, Sweden, and they came to America settling in Litchfield. They worked to save enough money to buy oxen and a wagon for their journey westward. They later traveled to Osceola, Nebraska, where they took a homestead.

In 1903, Martin was married in Omaha to Mabel Johnson and six children were born to them, namely: George (deceased), Harold (deceased), Erma of Clarks, Bertha (deceased), Merlin (deceased), and Goldie of Clarks.

COWGILL FAMILY

James Riley Cowgill and his wife, Mary, settled on a farm on the east edge of Clarks. The family moved to Clarks from Salem, Iowa, in 1903. They were the parents of one child, Barney, who married a Clarks teacher named Susan Ziegler. Their child, Dr. Bruce E. is presently the administrator of Educational Service Unit No. 7 in Columbus, Nebraska.

McLEAN FAMILY

Robert E. McLean was born August 5, 1880, to John and Mary Hartwell McLean. He and Cora Sanders were married in 1904. In 1905, they moved to Phillips, Nebraska, where he managed the

Foster Lumber Yard. In 1911, they returned to Clarks, at which time he and his father-in-law, Frank M. Sanders, started a grocery store in the building now known as the Youth Center.

The McLeans and their one daughter, Fay, lived in Columbus, Nebraska, and Laramie, Wyoming. Fay and Francis (Fritz) Bender were married in Laramie. The McLeans moved back to Clarks in 1930. During the years in Clarks, "Bob" was a member of the School Board, Town Board, had served as mayor, and was Postmaster. He and his son-in-law started their grocery store in the old Campbell building, February 9, 1935. Bob was active in this business until his health failed. He died March 3, 1950. The Benders retired from the store January 1, 1968.

SANDERS FAMILY

Frank M. Sanders, wife and two daughters, Cora and Clara, moved to Clarks in 1902. They operated a livery stable and hotel, a pool hall and grocery store. He died in December, 1954, at the age of 95. He will be remembered by many old timers as being an avid sportsman, interested in hunting, fishing and baseball games.

GEORGE A. McCONNELL FAMILY

In 1904, this family moved from Grand Island to a farm in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. The family consisted of grandmother Mary; George, "Delly" his wife, Effie; a son, George H.; a daughter, Edna; and Frank, the youngest.

Delly and Effie were active in church work. Effie served as Sunday School Superintendent, part-time pianist and President of Ladies Aid.

Delly was very interested in education, and was an instigator for the two-room school. He worked hard to get Pierce Chapel moved to its present location. Effie gave piano lessons, sometimes as many as fifteen a week and did sewing for the neighbor ladies. Sometimes in the winter, she gave singing lessons, also. The family enjoyed parties and many nights there would be a houseful of adults and a yardful of young folks there.

H. P. HANSEN FAMILY

Mr. Hansen was born in Denmark on November 1, 1868, and immigrated to America at the age of twelve. Mrs. Hansen was born in Lake Forrest, Illinois, in 1874. Their early married years were spent on a farm south of Mason City, Nebraska, living in a sod house where three of their children were born. In 1904, they moved to Clarks where they resided for forty years. Mr. Hansen was section foreman until his retirement. They built a home on twenty-two lots of land at

the west end of Amity Street. In 1944, the couple celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary and moved to Mason City. Later they lived in Kearney, Nebraska. The family were members of the Congregational Church.

Mr. Hansen died in 1950 at age 82 and in 1965, Mrs. Hansen died at age 90. Their five children are: Florence (Mrs. W. E. Davis) deceased, Irene (Mrs. E. E. Jandrall) of Bremerton, Washington, Eunice (Mrs. B. H. Achenbach) of Julesburg, Colorado, James Vernon of Rosemead, California, and Doloris (Mrs. Dave Morgan) of Santa Anna, California. This pioneer couple numbered nine grandchildren among their descendants.

JOSEPH CERNEY FAMILY

Mr. Cerney was born on March 16, 1866, in Moravia—the Austria-Hungarian region now known as Czechoslovakia. He immigrated to America with his parents at the age of twelve. They homesteaded near Linwood, Butler County, Nebraska. His wife, Katherine Godr, also a native of Moravia, accompanied her parents to America in 1872, settling in Saunders County. Joseph and Katherine were married on October 10, 1882, and were the parents of ten children. He was also a carpenter and built many barns and homes in this area. In March, 1904, Mr. and Mrs. Cerney moved into Clarks and purchased the Kellogg farm. Joseph died in July, 1915, and his wife in November, 1942.

A daughter named Liddie was born to them on August 31, 1895. She later married Ferdinand Didier who was born between Octavia and David City, Nebraska. Mr. Didier worked on a ranch in Callaway before moving northwest of Clarks in 1913. The couple moved into Clarks in 1959 to the home on East Amity Street where Liddie Cerney Didier presently resides.

DOCTOR SHAW LITTLE

The slogan of the time "Go west young man" was reversed in 1883 when the Dana D. Little family migrated eastward. Two year old Shaw Little came to Stromsburg, Nebraska, from Twin Creek, Wyoming. The father, mother, three small children, one hired girl and two hired men, brought a herd of wild horses to Stromsburg. The horses were rough broken and sold after arriving in Stromsburg. The family homesteaded in the High Prairie area and later purchased Little's Island near what is now known as Havens. Shaw Little attended the High Prairie Elementary School and was in school during the time of the famous Blizzard of '88. He graduated in 1887 from Stromsburg High School and taught school for the next two years in a sod schoolhouse in Cascade, Nebraska, (in the southeast

corner of Cherry County). Shaw was graduated from Western Dental College in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1905 and set up practice in Clarks that same year. An older brother, Dr. Lowell Little, had begun practice the previous year in the same building. Its location is the present site of the Bank of Clarks. A few years later the building was moved near the Power and Light Plant where it remained until it was demolished in 1974. Dr. Shaw Little continued practice there until 1967.

In 1906, Shaw married Nona Armstrong, a teacher in the Clarks School. Their family of three sons, Shaw, Tom and Jack, and one daughter, Barbara, all graduated from the Clarks High School. Mrs. Little returned to school as Principal and later taught in the High School following World War I and into the 1920's.

During sixty-two years of active dental practice Dr. Little served many years as Fire Chief, played in the City Band over twenty years and served on the school board. He was a strong advocate for the promotion of music and athletics as part of the school program.

Records are available to show that in the early years of his practice Dr. Little charged, then cancelled from his books, more dollars than he received in cash. Many people in Clarks remember this kind and capable man with affection.

Dr. Lowell Little, M.D., Clarks, Nebr., 1903.

DOCTOR LOWELL LITTLE

Lowell Little, brother of Shaw, began his medical practice in Clarks in 1904. During World War I he served for two and one-half years in the service of his country and was "loaned" to the British. He used his skills in France during that war. He left the service with the rank of Major and moved to Hayden, Colorado, in 1919. He was

the first doctor to perform surgery at the Solandt Hospital. In 1927, he moved to his present home in Fort Collins, Colorado. He will be 97 years old in August, 1976.

GEORGE SUTKO FAMILY

George Sutko and Anna Gembica were married September 24, 1905, and lived in Polk County. George was born to Mike and Pauline Sutko on January 27, 1884, in Polk County and attended school there. Anna Gembica was the daughter of Lawrence and Mary Gembica and was born on March 12, 1888, in Polk County and also attended school there.

George and Anna Sutko had one son and two daughters during their residence in Polk County. Later on they moved to Fullerton and took up residence on a farm. There, one son and twin daughters were born to them. In 1923, they moved to another farm home near District 16 and resided there for twenty years. In 1943, they retired and moved to Silver Creek. Anna died in 1960 and George in 1967, leaving fourteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

ALBERT GERBER FAMILY

Albert was born near Zurich, Switzerland, in 1869 and when he arrived in America he practiced his trade as wagon-maker. He later worked in a blacksmith shop in Columbus, Nebraska. Anna Haesler was also born near Zurich on February 27, 1882, and came to America with her parents John and Suzanna Haesler and her brothers and sisters in 1886.

After George and Anna were married, they moved to his farm northeast of Columbus. They were the parents of five children: Fred, Bertha (deceased), John of Kearney, Anne (Mrs. Henry Uitvlugt) of Santa Rosa, California, and Lena (Mrs. Mike Heacox) of Reno, Nevada. In 1906, they moved to a farm northeast of Clarks. The farm is presently owned by Mrs. Albert Gerber who now lives in Grand Island, Nebraska. Mr. Gerber died on October 31, 1927. His wife and daughters, Lena and Anne moved to Grand Island, Nebraska. Their other daughter, Bertha, died in 1920. The oldest son of Albert and Anna is Fred, who lived and farmed on the home place until 1944. At that time Fred and his wife moved to their present home on the west edge of Clarks. Fred and Helen Strasburg were married on October 3, 1928, in Omaha, Nebraska. They are the parents of one daughter, Sharon (Mrs. LeRoy Geier), who resides in Clarks and with her husband and their three children.

THE GEORGE THEODORE STRASBURG FAMILY

George Strasburg was born in Nicollet County, Minnesota, on April 23, 1870, the son of German-born parents. He married Theresa Graver in Lincoln in 1893. She was born in Hungary on April 6, 1871. They came to Clarks in 1924 and operated a bakery for several years.

Six children were born to their union: first born died in infancy, Roy (deceased), was employed in Douglas Store for several years and then moved to Vallejo, California, in 1944 with his wife, Zelma and children Wallace and Patricia; Mable (Mrs. Elmer Nelson) of Lincoln, Nebraska, Leonard of Clarks, Daisy (Mrs. Henry Graham) of Sweet Home, Oregon, and Helen (Mrs. Fred Gerber) of Clarks.

Mrs. George Strasburg died in June, 1934, and her husband on May 13, 1954.

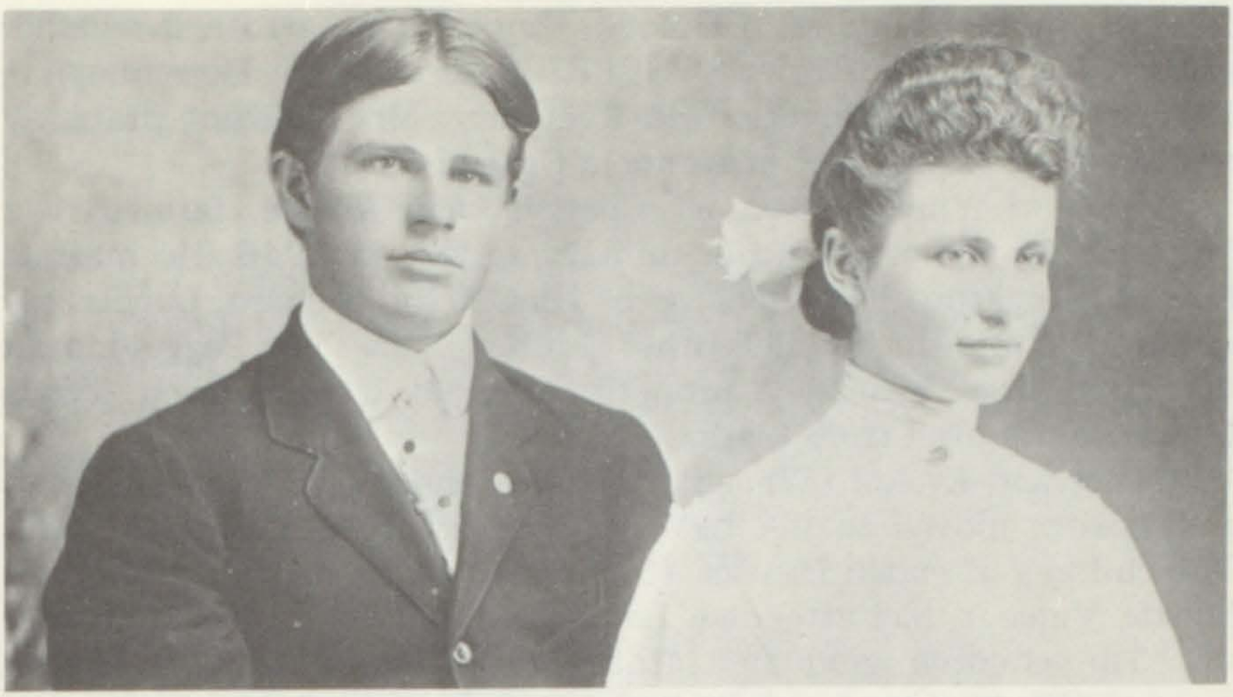
ALFRED L. BOBERG FAMILY

Alfred and his wife, Louella, moved to Clarks in 1906. He was telegrapher and station agent for the Union Pacific Railroad until his death in 1929. Their children, Al Jr. and Neva (Mrs. Downing) of Munroe Falls, Ohio, were raised and educated in Clarks. Al started his work in the old station which stood one block west and across the tracks from the present one. His daughter remembers the small, fenced-in park east of the station "and a well and pump from which we enjoyed many cool drinks of water."

The lives of the Bobergs centered around their church, especially the choir. Mr. Boberg's work prevented him from attending morning worship, but he was always there in the evening. Mrs. Boberg was active in the Ladies Aid and Missionary Society.

FRANK MADISON FAMILY

Frank Madison and Bertha Parish were united in marriage at Council Bluffs, Iowa, on April 3, 1907. To this union were born five children. Bertha died after the birth of twin daughters who died soon after their mother. Frank then came to Nebraska with his three remaining children: Viola, Donald and Elmer and farmed near Pierce Chapel. On December 26, 1917, Frank married Lottie Fish in the Methodist parsonage in Clarks. To this union were born six children: Ernest, Alice, Andy, Elma Jean, Opal and Frank Leslie. Elmer died on March 31, 1931, from flu and pneumonia and his father Frank Madison died a week later, on April 7, of the same disease. Lottie Madison later married Frank Gay of Central City and is presently a resident of that community.



Wedding picture of Clarence and Myrtle Vincent, July 24, 1907.

Once known as the Beardsley place, this home is the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Burdette Church and family.

CLARENCE LEROY VINCENT FAMILY

Clarence was born near Osceola, Nebraska, on June 24, 1886. In 1907, he married Myrtle Waggoner at the home of her parents, Reason and Emma (Krader) Waggoner. They lived on a farm east of Stromsburg and later moved south of town to another farm where three children, Evelyn, Richard and Lela were born. In January, 1939, the family, with the exception of Evelyn, moved to Clarks. Mr. Vincent was employed at the Noble Dairy and later became manager of the Farmers Co-op Store. He also was caretaker of the Clarks Cemetery until his retirement. During World War II he played piano and violin with a band known as "The Silver-Haired Daddys." The group entertained at dances in the Clarks and surrounding areas. Other members of the band were: Vincent Douglas, Dr. Shaw Little, Sam Wallace and William Strobel. One of their favorite couples was Fred and Myrtle Gilliard who came to dances and always requested a

"special" waltz number. Clarence Vincent also wrote a weather column for the CLARKS ENTERPRISE. He died on December 20, 1973, and is buried in the Polk Cemetery. Mrs. Vincent presently resides in the Parkview Rest Home in Central City.

Richard Vincent, son of Clarence and Myrtle, farmed near Clarks, after his return from military service in 1946. He married Lucille (Stockton) Kelly, widow of Glen Kelly. Richard, Lucille, her son Donald and the couple's other children, James and Peggy, moved to the George Beardsley property. Donald later married Twyla Church and moved from Clarks.

Dale and Evelyn (Vincent) Richards and their children, Dennis and Loritta moved to the LaVelle farm, south of Clarks, in 1941. The children attended District #60 School, which their grandmother, Myrtle Vincent, had attended. Later the family moved into District #5. The children graduated from Clarks Public School. Loritta married Gerald King and left Clarks. Dennis married Darlene King of Central City and farmed an area adjoining his father's farm. Later the couple with their sons, Michael, Ronald and Rodney moved onto his parents' farm.

Lela Vincent, teacher, first taught school in District #16, Merrick County, where she completed the January, 1941, term for Virginia Whetstine. She also taught the following year, which was the last time District #16 held classes. She taught school at District #5 and District #27. In 1945, she was married to Burdette Church who was recently discharged from military service after being wounded on Saipan. They are the parents of five children, namely: Linda, James of Omaha, Sandra (Mrs. Nyle Wheeler) of Omaha, Gerald and Thomas. Linda married Gerald Kohl in 1964, and the couple with their three children lived on a farm east of Clarks. Mr. Kohl died in an accident in 1969, and she married Forrest Gates and moved from the Clarks community. Lela and Burdette Church and family presently reside on the north edge of Clarks, in the former Beardsley home. Mr. Church is a carpenter.

GEHRT A. DICKMAN

G. A. Dickman was born in Holstein, Germany, on September 19, 1851, and homesteaded twelve miles southwest of Grand Island near Doniphan. In 1892, he was united in marriage to Amelia Schultz and together they had eight children. Amelia died in 1897 and a few years later he was united in marriage to Elizabeth Dorr. To this union were born four children, one daughter, Marie (Church) of Clarks and three sons: Henry of Sargent, Nebraska, Will of Penrose, Colorado, and Alfred of Callaway, Nebraska. In 1909, the family moved to a

farm seven miles northwest of Clarks and lived there thirteen years. After a severe illness of bronchial pneumonia Mr. Dickman died on April 27, 1923, and was buried in Grand Island, Nebraska.

MR. AND MRS. W. J. FOSBURY

W. J. Fosbury married Mayme Buckley of Callaway, Nebraska, in 1909 and moved to Clarks where he had purchased a furniture and undertaking business. Mr. Fosbury was a resident of Clarks for fifty-six years and was born near Axtell, Nebraska. After graduating from Nebraska Wesleyan University he was superintendent of the North Loup schools. He also served three years as supervising teacher in the Phillipine Islands associated with the United States Department of Education.

During his years of residence in Clarks he served as President of the Clarks Community Club, secretary of the School Board, clerk of the Village Board, secretary of the Modern Woodman Lodge, superintendent of the Sunday School of the Methodist Church, church choir and teacher of the Adult Bible Class. In 1917, he helped plan and complete a new school building in Clarks. During his term on the village board he was instrumental in the paving of the streets of Clarks. He was also a member of the building committee which planned for the rebuilding of the Methodist Church in 1947. He maintained his business in Clarks over fifty years.

He died in 1966 at the age of 87. Mr. and Mrs. Fosbury were the parents of two children: Evelyn (of Lincoln) and Walter (of Houston, Texas).

Charles and Rosina Wahl on their 50th wedding anniversary.

CHARLES WAHL FAMILY

Charles came from Germany in 1882, and worked in Iowa as a farm hand. His wife, Rosina Dietrich, also from Germany, settled in

Iowa in 1884. They traveled by lumber wagon to the parsonage and were married. They then ate dinner with the minister before returning to their farm home to work. In 1911, they migrated to a farm southwest of Clarks. Three children were born to them: Clara, another child who died in infancy, another Albert was accidentally killed in 1934. Mr. and Mrs. Wahl celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1940. They moved into Clarks and lived in the house presently occupied by Clara Wahl. Charles died in 1948 and Rosina in 1953.

Mildred E. Hunscote

Edward L. Hunscote

THE HUNSCOTE FAMILY

On February 22, 1911, Mildred Turner and Edward L. Hunscote, both of Fullerton, were married at the home of the bride's father northwest of Fullerton. After the ceremony, the couple drove by horse and buggy to a farm two miles northwest of Clarks which was to be their home for the next thirty-three years. The Hunscotes had just purchased the farm from the Gorgen family. The farm is presently owned and operated by Mr. Bill Kuhn and his wife (the Hunscote's only child, Joyce Nadine).

Ed never forgot the many young men who worked on his farm. Schuyler Masters, Darwin Gantz and others were always "his boys" even though most of them left for the city they were always grateful for the lessons learned as Ed's hired man. The Hunscote's neighbors were the Sweets, Philbrooks, Becks, Botkers and Martins.

They started attending the Congregational Church and later Mildred became a member. They both became active in the affairs of the community with Ed having banking interests for a time, serving on the Township and School Boards and the old Farmer's Union Co-op Board. For many years Fred Philbrook and Ed had a threshing rig together doing the neighborhood threshing. During the late 1920's and throughout the 30's, the Hunscotes had a small dairy delivering milk every day but Sunday to the stores and homes in Clarks. They milked from sixteen to twenty-four cows twice each day by hand. During the 30's Ed and his hired man, Charlie Brinkman, cut and hauled wood and kindling throughout the winter months to people in Clarks. Mildred supplemented the family income by baking and decorating angel food cakes for important occasions in the community — especially weddings. The Hunscotes always had a large garden sharing the produce with their friends.

In 1944, Ed decided to move to town to become the manager of the Farmer's Union Elevator. The Hunscote's purchased the Morgan family home — just behind the Methodist Church. Ed managed the elevator with occasional help from Virgil Bayne. Mildred helped keep the books. He served in that capacity until the old Co-op was dissolved in the 1960's and then he retired. In 1971, the Hunscotes observed their sixtieth wedding anniversary, and on May 29, of that year, Ed died at the age of 82. Mildred still maintains the family home in Clarks.

METRO BECK FAMILY

Metro, son of Anthony Beck, was born in 1884 in Austria. He came to New York state as a boy and in 1905 he wed Mary Drybala.

They farmed in Nance County, and in 1909 they moved to Merrick County. In 1914, they purchased a 160 acre farm northwest of Clarks. Metro and Mary were the parents of six sons and seven daughters: Edward, Frank (deceased), Charles, Walter, Albion, Donald, Mrs. Ed (Anna) Starostka, Mrs. Frank (Kay) Konwinski, Mrs. Frank (Stella) Gonsior, Miss Josephine Beck, Mrs. Charles (Dorothy) Gonsior, Mrs. Rueben (Rose) Anderson, and Mrs. Richard (Barbara) Savage. Descendants include over forty-four grandchildren and thirty-two great-grandchildren.

Metro's wife, Mary, died in 1944. He continued living on the family farm until 1965 when it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Donald (Alice Cutsor) Beck. Metro and his daughter, Josephine, retired to live with his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Konwinski.

Metro died on January 12, 1973. Many descendants of this couple presently farm in Merrick County.

CHARLES EARL SOUSER FAMILY

Charles Earl Souser was born August 16, 1892, in Bedford, Pennsylvania. When he was very young the family migrated to Dawson County, Nebraska, where he received his early education and became a member of the Methodist Church. Truth or fiction, family stories portray him as an energetic lad, selling popcorn and carrying a salt shaker around with him, earning the cognomen "Salty." He worked in a hardware store in Overton, attaining part-ownership, where he met Minnie Kathleen Ward.

Minnie was born October 1, 1893, in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Her family moved to Central City, Nebraska, where she went to school. She spent a busy childhood, helping her mother sew and run a boarding house. Her father had taught her to play guitar, but a driving love for music took her to neighbors who had pianos, which she learned to play by ear. Much later she graduated from the then Kearney State Teachers College and taught school near Overton.

After their marriage at Lincoln, Nebraska, April 11, 1917, the two moved to Clarks where Earl began his insurance career at the Clarks Bank. Later he established his own business, geared to the needs of the farmers. The dedication he poured into his work succeeded in seeing him through the Great Depression. His diligence was not unnoticed, as he was later selected as State Agent for the Great American Insurance Company.

Minnie taught herself shorthand, and as this new work took Earl away from his office, she substituted for him until his weekend return. This joint effort lasted many years until a first heart attack brought Earl back to his office. In the interim he was affiliated with the Congregational Church, became a member of Solar Lodge 134 AF & AM, received his 32nd degree as a Mason and was a Shriner. It was in his office, his pride and joy, where he died suddenly of another heart attack on March 4, 1957. He was sixty-four and had been in business forty years in Clarks.

During their working life together, Minnie became a member of the Eastern Star and Women's Clubs. A many-faceted person, she preferred all things beautiful; flowers, literature and most of all music. She sacrificed much of herself to give her three daughters: Kathleen, Jean and Polly, academically, musically and otherwise the things she believed important in life.

At the time of Earl's death she had begun lessons on her favorite instrument, the violin. Taking over the insurance business alone was not easy. In order to be the best possible job, she took an extension course from the University of Nebraska. She had attained an average grade of 98, and a final examination had yet to be finished. Finding the merchants closed for Columbus Day, she drove to Lexington, Nebraska, to visit a daughter. En route home that

October 12, 1959, at the age of 66, she was involved in a fatal automobile accident.

In this bicentennial year it is appropriate to mention that the Sousers were of patriotic mind. Many were the discussions of candidates and issues of the day, particularly as concerned the farmers. Minnie kept abreast of Washington's goings-on, questioning bureaucracy and accurately predicting the outcome of policies. There were Liberty Bell Banks and there were flags. July 4th was an all-out occasion from dawn until dark. These two lives together, a legend with a legacy of purpose and fulfillment.

FRANK FALK FAMILY

Frank Emil Falk, son of Andrew and Mary Falk, was born on a farm east of Stromsburg, Nebraska, on September 27, 1885. As a small boy he moved with his family to Wyoming, to Overton, Nebraska, and then to Hershey, Nebraska. There he married Miss Ida Krong in 1909. Together they farmed near North Platte, Newman Grove, and Bradish, Nebraska. In the fall of 1918, they purchased a farm one mile west of Clarks and moved there in March, 1919. Five years later he purchased the dray line in Clarks in partnership with his brother-in-law Walfred Krong. In 1926, Frank sold his part of the partnership and became manager of the Farmers Union Cream and Produce Co. This company opened for business in a little wooden building on Front Street. The business soon grew larger and he persuaded the Board of Directors to rent another building. A hardware line was added in January, 1930. Mrs. Falk became his assistant.

He was a member of IOOF Lodge and was a Past Grand and elected Treasurer, member of Solar Lodge 134, AF & AM and a Master Mason. Mr. Falk also served as a town board and fire department member. In 1924, he and his family were united with the Methodist Church, Clarks. He died on June 7, 1933, at the age of forty-seven years. He drowned as he was fishing at Pibel Lake near Spalding, Nebraska.

KRONG FAMILY

Mathias Walfred Krong was born in Sweden in 1878 and traveled to America with his parents in 1882. The family arrived in Omaha by train and later moved to Saunders County. They also lived in Boone and Lincoln Counties where Mathias Walfred farmed with his father and worked on a Union Pacific section crew. Walfred later became the foreman. He married Hildur Elizabeth Bergstrom in Julesburg, Colorado, on December 4, 1906, and they lived on a rented farm near Hershey for three years.

Mr. and Mrs. Krong, Florence and Norman.

In 1923, they moved to Clarks with their children, Florence and Norman. They had previously lived in Lindsay, Nebraska, where Mr. Krong was employed in his father's implement shop. Mathias Walfred and his brother-in-law Frank Falk purchased a dray line from George Dudney. Their equipment included a Model T Ford truck, team of horses, single-bottom plow, and other tools. The truck and wagon were used to "meet the train" and move groceries and other merchandise to the store and to take cream cans and eggs to the train. Mathias Walfred hauled coal from the lumber yards and elevators to the homes and businesses of Clarks. He also hauled wheat from the threshers to the elevator and moved household goods. In 1928, he sold the dray line to Frank Schuldt and went to work for the Farmers Oil Company. One year later he was named manager and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1957.

Mr. Krong became seriously ill in February, 1961, and died a short time later on March 8. He was buried in the Clarks Cemetery.

JAKE ZOUCHA FAMILY

In 1919, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Joseph Zoucha (Josephine Salomea Lassek), son and daughter of Polish immigrants, came from Tarnov, Nebraska, to settle on their 160 acre farm two miles north of Clarks. They built the farm buildings with the exception of the house which was contracted and built by G. J. Smith. In the process of moving here, the moving party "bunked" overnight at the home of Joe P. Zoucha, a brother, who lived approximately two and one-half miles north of this farmstead.

Here they raised their five children: Ben B., Lambert A., Adrian V., Marcelline A. (Mrs. Joseph V. Janovec), and Marie. The children received their education in the one-room schoolhouse, District #62 — the McLean School — which was located about a mile north of the farmstead. Some of the teachers who taught in this school were: Ellen Sweet Sloan, Gladys Hamilton, Edith Young, Maria Koch, Olga Danklesen, Bertha Clark, Frances Raynor Larson, Erma Wilson Adelson, Helen Harmon, and Barbara Schultz Phelps. Mr. Jake

Barn dance honoring the 100th birthday of George Zoucha, Sr. Surrounding him are his sons from left to right: George, Jr., Jake, John M., and Stanley, Sr. Photographed at the home of Agatha Gaver, the honorees sister.

Zoucha was also a member of the school board, serving as a moderator from 1920 to 1928. His son, Ben B., also served in the same position about thirty years later.

Jake Zoucha enjoyed playing his violin at many barn dances which were popular in the neighboring area at the time. Most of these were held at his sister's farm, Mrs. Joe (Agatha) Gaver, about a mile and a half north of Jake's farm.

Besides raising her family, Mrs. Jake Zoucha also enjoyed raising many geese, as well as ducks that found an abundance of water in the pasture creek and the nearby ditches. Other flocks were butchered and their feathers were used to make pillows and featherbeds.

The family moved into the house where Marie presently resides, in December, 1946. This was the final home until the death of Jake on March 29, 1957, and Mrs. Jake Zoucha on September 14, 1964.

DITTMER BROTHERS

Henry, C. J., H. P. and Herman Dittmer came from Germany and settled in Minden, Iowa, before moving to Clarks. The eldest brother, Henry, settled four miles east of Clarks in an area near the Platte River. Otto, a son of Henry and Maggie Dittmer, and his wife, Mary, had seven children. They are Lillie Graham of Silver Creek, Ted Dittmer, Ruth Jones and Dixie Jasper all of Stromsburg, Betty Carlson of Polk, Jack Dittmer of Clarks and Bobbie (deceased). Otto and Mary moved to Clarks in 1965. Otto died in 1967.

C. J. Dittmer moved to Clarks in 1907 and settled on a farm east of town. Herman Dittmer married Mary Reimers in 1901 and built a home one mile west of Havens in 1906. They were the parents of one daughter, Elsie Regan of Boulder, Colorado. Herman died in 1948 and his wife in 1940.

From left to right: Henry, C. J., Pete and Herman Dittmer.

H. P. Dittmer (Pete) and Marie Nobbmann were married in 1898 and lived in Emerald, Nebraska, until 1908 when they moved to Clarks. In 1931, they moved to Havens where he operated the Hord Elevator. He died in 1948. Five children were born to them: Fred H. of Havens, Dora Hahn of Clarks, Alvin who lives on a farm near Havens, and Albert (deceased) and Arthur (deceased) twin brothers.

HENRY DITTMER FAMILY

Mr. Dittmer was born in Germany on March 18, 1857, the oldest of five brothers and three sisters. He married Margurite Kohl in Minden, Iowa, in 1881. There were eleven children born to this couple. His wife, Margurite, died in 1896. He and his children moved to the Clarks community in 1897, settling near the Platte River east of Clarks.

One often wonders what causes actions on the part of people. In this case speculation and research by talking to some of the ancestors reveals it may have been a combination of grief, wishing to get away from familiar surroundings the couple had shared. Plus the land in Iowa at that time may not have been the kind he was used to farming and the urge to find better prompted the move.

In 1898, he married Maggie Juhl and there were three more children born from this union. Including the six children born to Maggie from a previous marriage there was now a grant total of twenty living children in this family.

One can readily grasp the significance of the phrase "population explosion" from the growth of this family. However, this was the trend in those early days of settlement and growth of this central Platte River Valley which has subsequently come to be known as the bread basket of the nation if not the world.

An interesting side note to the story of this family's entry into the United States is the fact his daughter Dorathy Mustard (nee Dorathy Dittmer) recalls her father left Germany to escape the mandatory military training required in Germany at that time (shades of our youth during our years of conflict in Viet Nam). She

HENRY DITTMER HOME (circa 1910). This house was constructed about 1905 on the land originally purchased by Henry Dittmer. It replaced a house which was on the land at the time of purchase. The family at that time consisted of 10 children at home. Pictured are, left to right: Martha, Dorathy, Annie, Hugo, Bill H., and Ed Juhl.

also recalls that Mr. Dittmer was able to subsequently bring his own mother to this country from Germany.

Although there are only two members of this, at one time, large family left living, one might say there is a multitude left to carry on. An example is the recent family reunion of the Dorathy Mustard family where there were forty-two present to honor her, out of a possible seventy-five descendants. The other living member of the original family is Mrs. Emma McDowell of Kansas.

THE EARL A. MUSTARD FAMILY

A family reunion was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Janulewicz of Clarks, youngest member of the family, Saturday, May 15, 1976, to honor Mrs. Dorathy Mustard. It was the first time all of the honoree's children had been together in Clarks since the death of their father, Earl A. Mustard in May, 1965.

Mrs. D. Mustard, the eleventh child of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dittmer, was born in Minden, Iowa. Shortly thereafter the family moved to the Clarks area and established their home southeast of Clarks.

Earl Mustard was born in the Silver Creek area, the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Mustard.

They were married in Columbus, Nebraska, March 1, 1918, and had a family of ten children. Two of the children have established their homes in Clarks, namely, Mrs. Martin Danklesen (nee Darlene Mustard) and Mrs. Jim Janulewicz (nee Irma Mustard). The following children are: Earl Mustard Jr. of St. Charles, Illinois, L. M. "Jack" Mustard of Vallejo, California, and Mrs. Harold Nelson (nee Marilyn

Mustard) of Lakewood, California. The other five children have established their homes in Nebraska: Mrs. Robert Kinney (nee Virginia Mustard) of Norfolk, Hal of Lexington, Robert of Central City, Mrs. Wm. Wagner (nee Faye Mustard) of Fullerton, and Mrs. Forrest Williams (nee Wilma Mustard) of Wayne.

Attending the reunion were her ten children, their spouses, twenty-three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Mrs. Mustard has thirty-six grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren.

The Multitude of Mustards, left to right: Mrs. Darlene (Mustard) Danklesen, below her are Jim D., Doug Newquist, fiance of Joann, and JoAnn D. Mr. and Mrs. Harold and Marilyn Nelson of California (no children present). Mrs. Bill Wagner of Fullerton (nee Faye Mustard) and Bill Wagner, below them are their children Jeanne, Karen, Darrel and Kevin. Mr. and Mrs. Bob and Virginia Kinney of Norfolk, and their children Kathy, Danny and Mike. Mrs. Jim Janulewicz of Clarks (nee Irma Mustard) and children Bryan, Deb, Paul, Barb, Carol and Janet. Mrs. Gloria Mustard and Mr. Earl Mustard Jr. of Illinois (no children present). The honoree seated D.K.M. Mr. and Mrs. "Jack" and Doris Mustard of California (no children present). Mrs. Millie Mustard and Mr. Bob Mustard of C.C., their children Kim, Jacque and Doug. Mrs. Betty Mustard and Mr. Hal Mustard of Lexington (no children present). Mrs. Wilma Williams and Mr. Forrest Williams of Wayne, their children Brenda, Tami, Allen and Steven.

STEGER FAMILY

John Steger was born January 8, 1883, in David City, Nebraska, to Joe and Mary Steger. He married Clara Langhorst on January 14, 1913. They farmed in Butler County until 1926, when they settled on the old Wolf farm north and west of Clarks. Later they moved west of Clarks onto a farm presently occupied by Emil Wruble.

They were the parents of eight children who are: Grace (Mustard) of Clarks, Margaret (Miller) of Central City, Alice of Omaha, Nebraska, Marcella also of Omaha, Raymond, Leonard, Lois all of Clarks. One son, Barney, died in 1959. In 1930, the family moved into Clarks residing on West Amity Street. Mr. Steger was then street commissioner and also did work as a laborer. He died on June 18, 1949. Three years later Mrs. Steger and the children moved to a farm east and north of Clarks, on the Bill Stump place which Raymond and Leonard operate for Regan Farm Co. of Omaha, Nebraska.

SAMUEL TERRY FAMILY

Samuel Terry, of Maryland, married Sarah Dock of Illinois and settled in Columbus, Nebraska. To this union five children were born. Their son, Raymond Terry married Violet Paris in 1920 at Springview, Nebraska. The couple lived in Monroe before coming to the Terry farm where they raised cattle. Raymond died in an accident in 1945, and Violet moved to Clarks the following year and worked as a seamstress. She has spent fifty-six years in the Havens and Clarks community.

Peter Ksiazek Family. His father Joseph stands next to him and at the right of photo.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Ksiazek

JOSEPH KSIAZEK FAMILY

Joseph came to Nebraska from Poland in the 1880's. Two years after his arrival he brought two of his sons, Peter and Walter to Nance County where he was engaged in farming. Two years passed and the two remaining sons, Stanley and Frank joined their family. Joseph's wife, Anna, and their two daughters, Mary and Julia arrived seven years after he had settled in America. Joseph farmed in Nance County near the Loup River for the rest of his life. He later spent his years of retirement in Howard County.

Joseph's son, Peter, married Anna Liss in 1902 in Duncan, Nebraska. The couple farmed in Nance County and then moved into Merrick County in 1921. They later purchased a farm four miles west of Clarks. Twelve children were born to them. They are: Ted, Alonzo, Leo, Emily (Mrs. Max Neneman), Mary (Mrs. Frank Swantek), Elizabeth (Mrs. Edmund Cieloha), Cecilia (Mrs. Louis Czarnik), Stanley (deceased), Ed (deceased), Helen (deceased), Sylvester (deceased), and John (deceased). One of their sons, Alonzo, was Merrick County Cornhusking Champion in 1933, 1938, 1940 and 1941. He won every year he entered the event and in 1941 won the championship by a victory of two bushels over his nearest opponent. He placed second in the State contest and was ranked fifteenth in the National event. Anna Ksiazek died in 1962, and Stanley remained on the farm until his death in 1973. Descendants of this pioneer couple include twenty-five grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

The Ksiazek family farm was purchased in 1974 by James and Pat (Gonsior) Ksiazek, son and daughter-in-law of Alonzo Ksiazek. Mr. and Mrs. James Ksiazek are the parents of three children: Kenneth, Brent and Kristi Lyn.

MR. AND MRS. JOE KIOLBASA

Joe and his wife, Valeria, were the children of parents who had immigrated to the United States. Joe came from Platte County and Valeria, Polk County. In 1909, at Columbus, Nebraska, they were married and farmed near Tarnov for a few years. They moved to another farm near Elyeria until they purchased a farm near Clarks in 1919. There they resided until they retired and moved to Clarks in 1950. To this union eight children were born. They are: Elizabeth (Mrs. Emory Jarecki), Esther (Mrs. Lindy Hornback), Dorothy (Mrs. Leo Prososki), Monica (Mrs. Harlon Dixon), Lorraine (Mrs. Dan Siemek), Alex (deceased), Frances (deceased), and Clara (Mrs. Ted Ksiazek, deceased).

Joe Kiolbasa died in 1972 and Valeria died in 1970. Mr. and Mrs. Leo Prososki are the present owners of the family farm since 1950, when Valeria and Joe retired. They are the parents of five children, namely John, Alice, Janice (Mrs. Gene Davis), Mary (Mrs. John Sims), and Lucy (Mrs. Ron Hinrichs).

ROY NELSON FAMILY

Roy Nelson and Gladys Adelson were married at Stromsburg, Nebraska, on December 17, 1925, and farmed north of Stromsburg for two years. The following year they moved to Clarks. The first year of farming the crops were taken by drought and the next year

Mr. and Mrs. Roy B. Nelson

by hail so in March of 1928 they moved to a farm east of Clarks which they presently occupy. The cyclone that damaged Clarks in 1928 destroyed several of their buildings and is well remembered by the couple whose son was only six months old at the time. They are the parents of three children: Max of Clarks, Nebraska, Joan (Mrs. Ted Wyman) of Silver Creek, Nebraska, and Jean (Mrs. Jack Wilhelmy) of Lincoln, Nebraska.

Roy and Gladys celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at the Methodist Church, Clarks, on November 23, 1975. Descendants of this couple number eleven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

W. L. Copeland in his drug store.

W. L. COPELAND FAMILY

Mr. Copeland and his wife, Ruth, came to Clarks from Smith Center, Kansas, in 1926. They purchased the downtown drug store in town previously owned by Pearl and Tom Keefe. The store was later moved to the Red and White Grocery building, in the center of the block.

"Cope," as he was affectionately called, was the town druggist until his death in 1959. Mr. and Mrs. Copeland were the parents of two children: Terry, an I.B.M. engineer living in Des Moines, Iowa, and Virginia Willits of Silver Creek, Nebraska. Mrs. Copeland presently maintains her residence in Clarks.

WALLACE FAMILY

Samuel Charles Wallace was born in Barn Hill, Illinois, in 1890, and spent his childhood in Kentucky and Oklahoma. He was orphaned at age seven and raised by his grandparents. When he was barely sixteen, he went to work for the Frisco Railroad in Oklahoma. He taught himself the Morse Code and became a proficient telegrapher. At the age of eighteen, he came to Nebraska and worked for a time at the Union Pacific depot in Silver Creek.

Gladys Tivey Wallace was born in Schuyler, Nebraska, in 1884, and moved with her parents to a farm near Silver Creek when she was a child. She and Samuel Wallace were married at the family farm in Silver Creek on December 24, 1913.

After their marriage, Sam worked as station agent in Stapleton, Valparaiso, Belgrade, Rockville, Pleasanton, and Humphrey. In 1930, the family moved to Clarks, and he continued his work as station agent until his death in 1950.

Sam was a man of many interests and hobbies. He served on the Clarks School and Town Boards. He helped organize and was a past president of the Clarks Lions Club. He was a past master of Solar Lodge 134 A.F. & A.M. and served as secretary for twenty years.

During the thirty's and early forties he played in the town band. Practice was every Monday night in the old school gym, and the band concert was on Wednesday night. This was a big drawing card for the Clarks community. The bandstand was set up on the library corner intersection. When the old bandstand became unsafe and beyond repair, the corner was roped off and chairs set up in the street. All of the business places remained open during the band concert.

The band was composed of both adults and children. Sam was an excellent musician, and for a number of years played the trumpet. When plenty of trumpet players became available, he switched to the tuba. Parnella and Sam Jr. played in the band for many years.

After ill health curtailed Sam's physical activities, he built his own short wave radio set, and became a licensed amateur radio operator. In 1938, he was awarded a silver loving cup from the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce for his untiring work during natural disasters.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace were the parents of four children: Parnella, Phyllis, Virginia, and Samuel Jr. Phyllis died in 1927 and Virginia in 1929.

Parnella married LeRoy Dexter in 1939 in Clarks. They have three children: Jerry, Kathleen and Jon. Sam Wallace Jr. served three years in the marines, and began work for the Union Pacific Railroad after his discharge. He married Louise Garrettson in 1951, and they lived in Clarks and Salina, Kansas, before moving to North Platte where he works as a dispatcher. Sam and Louise Wallace are the parents of four sons: Rex, Douglas, Wayne and Larry.

Mrs. Gladys Wallace continues to maintain her home in Clarks, where she has lived for forty-six years.

Nettie and Ralph Cook

RALPH R. COOK FAMILY

Ralph R. and Nettie M. Cook moved with their twin sons, Ralph and Ray, to Clarks from Fullerton in 1936. They purchased a forty acre tract of land on the north edge of Clarks from the Philbrook family and made it their home. The twin sons caused quite a bit of confusion with their identical traits. Ralph Sr. died in 1953 following a tragic car accident and Nettie died in 1972. Ray married Veda Smith in 1942, and to this union was born one daughter, Reda Rae (Mrs. Dennis Daly), mother of two sons living in Waterloo, Iowa. Ray died of a heart attack in 1974. Ralph Jr. married Betty Douglas in 1943, and they are the parents of one daughter, Connie (Mrs. Donald L. Carlson), and have three grandchildren, all of whom reside in Grand Island.

VINCENT DOUGLAS FAMILY

Vincent was born in 1890, the son of William and Mary McCarthy Douglas. After graduating from high school he attended college for a short time, but money was scarce so he returned home to help in the family's general store. He and a brother, Bill, operated the movie theatre in Clarks. Their sister, Josie, played the piano to

accompany the silent movies shown. In 1916, Vincent married Pearl E. Zwiebel, and they were the parents of two daughters, Phyllis and Betty. Vincent entered into the banking business and later operated an insurance and real estate firm of his own. His daughter, Phyllis, became ill in 1936, and she was unable to attend her senior graduation where she received highest honors. She died a few days later. Betty married Ralph L. Cook in 1943, and still resides in Clarks. Pearl died in 1961 and Vincent in 1966.

Hazel and Vern Smith

VERN SMITH FAMILY

In March, 1934, Vern and Hazel Smith and daughter, Veda (Mrs. Ray Cook), moved from a Polk County farm to Clarks. They purchased a cafe, gas station, plus living quarters, where the 3-D Restaurant is now located. Vern joined the post office staff in 1942 as assistant postmaster and retired in November, 1965. During those years, Hazel and his daughter served along-side him part-time.

He served over fifteen years with the Town Board and was Secretary of the local Lions Club for many years.

Hazel was an employee of the Clarks Telephone Company and Benders Grocery, plus her years in the Post Office. She now resides in their home across from the Methodist Church, which they built in 1957.

Vern died in October, 1967. Their son-in-law, Ray, died in October, 1974, leaving his wife, daughter, Reda Rae Daly, his twin brother, Ralph, who resides in Clarks, and two grandsons, Michael and Patrick.

LORREL BRANTING FAMILY

Lorrel was born near Clarks, the son of Clifford and Iva Branting. His childhood was spent in Polk, where he was a graduate of Polk High School.

Virginia Rose was born in Big Springs, Nebraska, the daughter of Dick and Nettie Stuart. She spent her childhood in Central City graduating from Central City High School.

Lorrel and Rose were married in 1938 in Central City. They lived there the first eight years of marriage, raising the first five children.

Lorrel is retired after working thirty-eight years as a section man for the Union Pacific Railroad. He enjoys fishing, hunting and other outdoor sports. Rose operated the "Branting Beauty Shoppe" in Clarks. She first opened the shop in 1960. After fifteen years of business she closed the shop in 1975. Rose now keeps busy with hobbies including all kinds of handwork and cake decorating. Lorrel and Rose raised eleven girls and four boys during their thirty-seven years of marriage. They are: Donald (wife-Annette, two sons and a daughter-Clarks); Richard "Dickie" (deceased); Cecil (wife-Janine-Denver, Colorado); Joan (Mrs. Herman Blake, a son and daughter-Denver, Colorado); Kathleen (Mrs. Skip Boruchin, a son-Denver, Colorado); Lois (Mrs. Keith Bergman, a son and three daughters-Scribner, Nebraska); Pauline (Pauline Swanson, a son and three daughters-Takamah, Nebraska); Diane (Diane Groetzinger, a son and daughter-Denver, Colorado); Rosetta (Mrs. Marvin Walker-Denver, Colorado); Gwen (Mrs. Bruce Jarrett, a daughter-Englewood, Colorado); Pam (Mrs. Jim Kava-Denver, Colorado); Waunetta (Mrs. Terry Engel, a daughter-Clarks, Nebraska); Deb-at home; Tom-at home; Lorrie (deceased). Lorrel and Rose have eighteen grandchildren.

JOHN MORRIS FAMILY

In the early 1930's, John and Pauline Morris moved to Clarks from Osceola to the farm now known as the Phil Sundberg farm. They were the parents of five children who are: Mrs. Bert (Rose) Myers from Elkhorn, Nebraska — children: Herbert, Romona Senkbile, Homer, Larnie and Marvin; Mrs. John (Vickie) Murcek from Evan, Colorado — children: Robert and Doris; Louis Morris from Clarks, Nebraska — children: Dale, Erma Grosch, Dave, Jerry, Connie Ziemba, and Terry; Carrie Boettner from Omaha, Nebraska — son, Harold; Adolph Morris from Central City, Nebraska — children: Donald, Roger, Louise Mills, Dennis, Betty Stephensen, twins Debby Harlow and Barb, and Mike.

The original Morris name was Moritz. It was changed through the generations. The Morris' lost their farm due to hard times and resided in Central City until their deaths. Descendants number twenty-two grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

Chapter 9

Tape-Recorded Interviews With Clarks V.I.P.'s Recollections

MY MEMORIES OF CLARKS
as told by Clair Dixon

Clair Dixon has lived a life centered around education and the advancement of knowledge to the young people of this area. She was a teacher for twenty-eight years and served as Merrick County Superintendent for twelve years. She still resides in the family home in Clarks. Her love of animals is reflected by the numerous bird feeders and the animal food she puts out in her lovely yard. She is the last remaining member of the Dixon family.

T. L. Dixon came to Nebraska as a young man and was county superintendent in Saline County. Later he moved to Polk County, where he farmed until he moved to Clarks. He built the Dixon house at this time and started a general merchandise store. He then returned to his home state of Maine and brought his young bride to live in Clarks. He ran his store until it was destroyed in the fire that raged through the downtown business district of Clarks.

Clair recalls, "My mother sent my brother and me upstairs in this house to watch the fire, but we were not under any circumstances to come downtown. Of course, she went down and helped carry out every thing they could before the fire got the building."

Her father then rebuilt the store. He leased it to Bill Douglas. Her father then became deputy county treasurer for two terms. Then he was elected county treasurer for two terms. Later he retired and overlooked the operation of his farm north of town. Jerry Dittmer now farms this land.

Clair graduated from Clarks High School in 1910. The members of her class were: Josie Douglas Morris, Bryan Ward, Wallace Brown, Harold Shonsey, Earl Davis, Kenneth Parkens, Blanch McConnell, Florence Hansen, and Lucille Stanley. She then attended the University of Nebraska and taught school in many communities. For twenty-three years she taught at Grand Island Senior High.

She drove back every weekend to be with her mother.

The Dixon house was the only house in the western part of town for many years. It was surrounded by pastures. "Mother had an old Jersey cow she kept in the pasture out back. We would sell milk for five cents a quart. I remember our neighbor, Mrs. Westgate, would always want a pint of milk in the morning and a pint in the evening to make sure it was fresh," recalls Clair.

Some of the early families in Clarks were the Stanleys, McConnells and Kerrs.

Clair remembers the county fair being in the pasture north of town. Clifford Barnes now lives there. She relates, "When the fair came, the owners of the pasture and grove would just leave their cattle in there. They would put a sty over the fence and you had to climb over it to get to the fair."

Her father and Mr. W. Chamberlain had a fine set of black racing horses which were both men's pride and joy. She recalls, "I remember my mother heating a large buffalo robe on Sunday nights for my father to sit on when he drove back in the winter. I believe it took him about an hour and a half to drive from Clarks to Central if the weather was good."

Clair once said, "I love this town very much. I was born here and this has always been my home. I hope to die here also."

RETROSPECT WITH A TRUE LADY

as told by Annie Feehan

One of Clarks' most respected citizens is Annie Feehan, the daughter of a pioneer family. She has served in many capacities in the community including terms on the school and library boards. It is with pride that we salute her as one of Clarks' most distinguished citizens.

The parents of Annie Feehan immigrated from Ireland in the 1860's and located in Rock Island, Illinois. From there they moved to Clarks and settled on a farm west of town. She attended the Baird school till the eighth grade and then west to Clarks High School. She graduated in 1904, and then attended Fremont Normal. She taught school in the Clarks area. "Out at the country school I was my own janitor. I was paid $35 a month plus $1 for doing the janitor's work. I would have to get wood and coal, bring in water, and keep the school clean."

After teaching for ten years she lived on her brother's farm. He was a livestock feeder and she helped in the operation of the farm. Some of the early neighbors in this

area were the Lambs and the Quinns. Later she moved into town where she now lives.

"During the tornado of '28 we lost quite a lot of stock and the roof was torn off our house," said Annie.

Annie has been a life long member of St. Peter's Catholic Church. "When the parish voted to build a new church, many of the members complained about it being built out in the country. Of course in those days it was just pasture and farmland in the western part of town," said Annie.

Annie has been a devoted member of the community, and we wish her many more happy years with us.

HOW I REMEMBER CLARKS
as told by Etta Shepherd

Etta Shepherd's family was one of the early families to come to Clarks and Havens. Her long life has been filled with many exciting and happy times. She has many memories of the life of the early pioneer and loves to recall them to all. She now resides in Clarks and is known for her love and interest in the people around her.

Etta Antrim was born in the year 1889 at the farm now owned by Ed Boettner near Havens. "I remember when I was three years old I saw my first Indian," recalls Etta. "They were camped near Silver Creek and I saw an Indian squaw smoking a pipe. That was the first time I ever saw a woman smoke."

When Etta was three years old her family moved to Clarks. They operated the hotel where the Clifford Lovelace house now stands. Some of the early stores on that street were: Douglas Store (where Merriman's is), Jim Gray's restaurant (where Fred Swedenburg had his garage), Lindahl's boarding house, and Ace Dewey's livery stable (just east of Eva Lamb's house).

Later the family moved back to near District #40 and Etta remained in that area for most of her life until she moved into town in 1959. Etta said, "In those days, when we went to town you could just drive across the sections because there weren't any fences. Everyone had a driving team. They were your special horses, and you kept them nice and shiny much like we do our cars now."

In those days there was only a single railroad track. Also there were twenty-two passenger trains a day that went through Clarks. "I remember one winter that we were getting low on coal. My father took a turkey out to the railroad track. As soon as a train came my father waved it down with a turkey. Then the engineer gave him some coal in exchange for the turkey," said Etta.

The first store at Havens was on the north side of the

tracks. The farmers would come and weigh their grain there and then just scoop it into the railroad cars. The first owner of the store was Alex Blair.

"I remember the tornado of 1928 very well. I was in the kitchen getting supper when my husband came running in. He said that he had just seen a twister drop. We went down in the cave with our girls and our hired man. The tornado went down the tracks toward Havens, but when it got there it turned and went straight east. It then went down our fence row and rolled posts and all into a nice big ball," said Etta.

"I also remember a terrible hailstorm in 1895. The radishes and onions were up, but when my folks went out the next morning the hailstones had dug them all out of the ground. Also that year the Silver Creek was three-fourths of a mile wide."

Etta recalls, "In those days we had to make up our own entertainment. At District #40 we had a literary club every week. It wasn't much, but we had fun doing it."

REMEMBRANCES OF A PIONEER WOMAN
as told by Meta Key

Meta Key has been one of Clarks' most colorful and active residents during her ninety-two years. She is the granddaughter of Col. C. B. Hartwell. Meta is most fondly remembered as a piano teacher. She is a lady who is loved and respected by all.

"My grandfather was highly respected by the Indians," said Meta. "Once when he was gone the Indians rode up to Junction Ranch. Just my grandmother and mother were there at the time. They demanded all the corn that the family had just harvested for the winter. My grandmother gave in to their demands and the Indians rode away. When my grandfather returned and found out what had happened he saddled up his horse and rode out to the Pawnee camp across the river. When he returned he had all the corn with him.

"My mother went to the sod house school on the ranch," recalled Meta. "Everyday she would have to herd cattle from the site of the present Shonsey farm back to the ranch. She would ride a horse and read her studies while she rode."

Hans Kokjer, Meta's father, came from Denmark when he was seventeen years old. He moved to Clarks and set up a business just east of where the present lumber company is. His business consisted of three parts. The first was an implement and buggy shop operated by him. Meta recalls, "My father's business was in a two-story building. When he got a buggy or something, he wouldn't have room

for it down in the shop because he probably would be working on another one. So he and his brother built a large hand-pulled elevator. When a buggy was brought in they would put it on the elevator and pull it upstairs. They would also store the fixed buggies up there until their owners came and got them." The second part of the Kokjer business consisted of a blacksmith shop run by John Poland. Mr. Poland was married to Carry Hartwell. The third part of the business was a woodworking shop run by Matt Kokjer.

Meta remembers, "All the businessmen of Clarks took turns serving on the school and town boards when they were first started. When they met they all wore tall stove-pipe hats. After a few years of this practice it became harder and harder to find men who would volunteer to serve. This occurred because the businessmen became fearful of their economic livelihoods. If a person did not like the way you voted on a certain issue he would just quit coming to your store. It got so if you were elected it meant you would probably lose some business."

The Clarks' town band practiced at the Kokjer home. Hans Kokjer was the leader and so at an early age Meta was exposed to music. "The band's uniforms consisted of blue wool fabric with gold braid and buttons."

Meta graduated in 1903 with seven other seniors. Meta recalls, "We went to Central City to get our picture taken together, but when we got there the photographer was drunk. We had to return home and go to Osceola the next day to get our picture. However, one of the boys in our class couldn't go. He was a farm boy and his father wouldn't let him go two days in a row from the farm. So in our senior picture there are only seven of us."

Meta was married in 1911 to William Key. "Father Key came to Nebraska from England and my husband was born in a sod house. In 1893, we had a severe drought, but because he lived by the river my father-in-law had a crop. The next spring farmers came from all over to buy seed corn from him," said Meta.

Meta, as well as her four brothers, all attended the University of Nebraska. Then she attended Oberlin College for two years and studied music. When she returned home to Clarks she began to give music lessons. She would drive her old horse and buggy around to give lessons and never charged much for her time. Meta remembered once that her brothers were hired by her uncle to haul a pig across the river. It took them all day and they were paid twenty-five cents.

Meta remembers once that the river got so high they could take a boat and float on Amity Street.

Meta remembers the tornado of 1928. "When the storm first came up I was at the Congregational Church attending a Ladies Aid meeting. Then Mrs. Jimmy Booth and I went to Copeland's Drug Store and waited out the storm. My husband was out at the farm plowing. When he saw the twister he just unhitched the horses and just sat out on the plow and waited out the storm," said Meta.

Meta recalls, "My father went back to Denmark in 1920. He brought back some tulips with him. The Catholic Church was just across from us in those days. My dad went over and asked the Father if he wanted some of his tulips to plant in the corner of the lot. He said that he did, so he and my father planted them in the corners of both lots. In those days we understood each other, and I think we need more of that now." As a testimony to this understanding these tulips still bloom each year.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PUBLIC SERVANT
as told by Cleo Schank

For forty-six years Cleo has been librarian in the Clarks town library. She is now helping third generation families in the library. Her faithfulness and long service to the community has been an example to all. Each one of the citizens of Clarks holds a special place for her in our memories of growing up in this town. Many citizens will fondly remember Cleo as a V.I.P. in Clarks.

Cleo was born in 1892 in Clarks, which is the present site of the Ruth Douglas home. Her grandfather Stearns had built this house along with many others in Clarks. Cleo recalls some of the early experiences that her mother had with the Indians. "My mother had long blond hair and blue eyes. The Indians had never seen anything like it before so often scores would come at a time to look at the little white papoose. My mother said that she would crawl under the bed as far as she could to get away from them. My grandfather wasn't a man to fool around with and the Indians were wary of him. However, when he would leave they would almost instantly show up. My mother's brothers caught on to this and whenever any Indians would appear they would come running, saying that their Pa was coming back. As soon as the Indians heard that, they would clear out as fast as they could.

"My grandmother often said that she killed many a rattlesnake by waving a sun bonnet in its face and then killing it with her shoe," recalls Cleo.

Cleo attended school at Clarks. They didn't have a kindergarten in those days, but she went to a nursery school. "I remember that across the rooms there was

always a motto. A few that I remember are 'Order is God's First Law' and 'Cleanliness is Next to Godliness'. We had to learn many poems and writings by heart, and I still remember them to this day. We had fire drills just as they do now and many other fun activities. In high school I remember we had a chemistry lab in the basement. We mixed up some awful messes down there," said Cleo.

Cleo went to the Episcopal Church until she was twelve years old. It later was moved to Albion. "The Friends had a meeting house where Mildred Hunscote now lives," said Cleo. "Every Friday afternoon we would go there for singing school. We had little, red books that we used."

Cleo said that each summer there would be a merry-go-round in the lot where Mabel Pollard now lives. "On Memorial Day all us little girls in town would put on our new, white dresses. Then we would get in a lumber wagon and go out to the cemetery. Once there, we would take little bunches of flowers wrapped in tin foil and put them on the soldiers' graves. We would save the foil from the insides of tea bags," remembers Cleo.

Cleo's father, Archie Stearns, was mailman for Rural Route #2. He first started delivering mail in 1900. "He would start out as soon as the mail would come in, in his horse and buggy. He changed horses at Frank Rose's and sometimes at the farm where Dennis McLean now lives. "After Thanksgiving, Dad would take off the wheels on our wagon and put sled runners on. Every spring when it began to warm up he would worry about when to put the wheels back on," said Cleo.

"When I was little I remember that Clarks had board sidewalks. We would think it was terrible if we would drop one of our pennies down in between the cracks," said Cleo.

Cleo taught a country school on Prairie Island and earned $30 a month. She also remembers when people could ride the local train, round-trip to Central City and back for twenty-five cents.

Cleo once said, "I enjoy people and I love being around them." If you don't believe this simply visit the Clarks Library.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE MERRICK COUNTY FAIR AT CLARKS

by Harold Snider

During the 1900's the Merrick County Fair was at one time held in our community. Pre-fair activities started with a booster day when people traveled to neighboring towns to advertise the big event. The

Merrick County Fair, 1914, held in Richardson Grove, north of the Clifford Barnes farm, Clarks. Shown is a reaper on display. Among those pictured are Ed Stewart, Mrs. Schrawger, Mrs. Al Morse, Mrs. Sanders, Mr's Little, Campbell, Antrim, Bonner, Thomas Key and Cyrus Abel.

fairgrounds were located in the William Gantz cottonwood grove and pasture on the northwest corner of Clarks. It was situated two blocks from the present Clarks school.

School day was a commemorative day at the fair. Most school districts showed their floats. That afternoon a pit-barbecued beef luncheon was served. There were numerous exhibits to view. Cattle, hogs, poultry and produce were also shown. Implement dealers showed their wares including horse-drawn machines, wagons and top-buggies. There were many booths of all kinds and always a

Pleasant Hill School, District 15, float, Merrick County Fair. Pearl Dexter was school teacher.

Scudder School, District 33, float at the Merrick County Fair, 1910.

merry-go-round. The fair had entertainment of all kinds, ballgames, pulling contests and sack races. The greatest and most exciting event was the rising of the hot-air balloon. The basket beneath held one or two men. The crowd followed below the balloon to its landing site. Everyone hoped it would rise and not catch on fire. It did not always rise but the event was worth the wait.

THE ICE HOUSE
by Florence Brown Snider

When I was a child we looked forward to a cold, clear, freeze, for we knew it meant plenty of ice for our use in the summertime. In January the men went to the river to find a good spot where the ice was thick. They cut the blocks of ice and loaded them into wagons and brought them to town. The ice was then stored in buildings known as ice houses. It was packed between sawdust and straw to hold through the summer months. On a cold afternoon in "ice weather" you could see a procession of wagons coming to town bringing ice. Sometimes it was so cold for the men that they walked along side their teams. Still on a cold day in "ice weather" I can almost hear the wheels of the wagons as they squeaked along in the snow. The sound was very different as the wheels were of iron and not rubber. To this day we still refer to a January day as "good ice weather."

Chapter 10

The Towns of Havens and Cattaragus

HAVENS

Havens, located approximately half way between Clarks and Silver Creek, began as one of the sidetracks built by the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1860's. Only a single track was laid to begin with so the sidings were necessary for trains going in opposite directions to meet and bypass each other. After the double track was installed they were used to allow the freight trains to pull off so the faster passenger trains could maintain their schedules. This also limited the freights to the length of the bypass tracks.

All of these sidings were named and many of them formed the nucleus of the towns which continue to exist. At first Havens was the site of a small store on the north side of the tracks which handled the provisions necessary for pioneer life. It also provided a weighing service but was without grain handling facilities. The scale beam was located inside the store with the platform next to the building. Grain to be shipped was weighed, then the farmer pulled his wagon alongside a waiting boxcar and scooped the grain in, with that of his neighbors', to be hauled to market by the railroad.

An early owner of this trading place was Alex Blair. Later, in the early 1890's, a family named Bongart operated the store. It was then abandoned and stood empty for a period of years until converted into a house for the elevator manager. (This house is still

Havens, pictured are the garage, picture show and bank. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

Havens Bridge, 1926

in use by Ray Stern who moved it to Clarks and had it completely remodeled.)

The railroad maintained a section crew at Havens and the workmen and their families' living quarters were boxcars which were parked on a special derail alongside the tracks on the north side. The Peotas, Bartuneks and Staniecs were some of these early families. The house for the family of the section boss was originally located near these boxcar houses in line with the road from the north. This required traffic to circle out around it to cross to the south side of the tracks. The road was later straightened and the crossing relocated when the foreman's house was moved approximately forty rods to the west. It was placed in a grove of trees along the right of way. Herman Hermelius and his wife occupied this house for many years in the 1920's and 30's. Jake Harding's family also lived there while he was foreman in the late 1930's.

The converted boxcars were later placed on permanent foundations a considerable distance east of the crossing. Some were still single car dwellings but part of them consisted of two cars set with a few feet between them. They were connected by a hallway, making an H-shaped house. About the time of World War II these houses and the common coal shed used by all section families were demolished when the railroad ceased to provide housing for their employees. The railroad also stopped furnishing coal for section family use as had previously been the custom. Pension, medical care plans, and overtime pay was available during that time. A section hand's job was more lucrative and secure than that of many other hired laborers. The working conditions remained less than ideal. It was grueling work in the heat of summer's sun and the cold of winter winds. The job required the lifting of heavy tools, ties and occasionally rails. The men were transported to and from work with hand cars which were later motorized but without protection from the elements. These cars ran on the rails and had to be removed for the passage of trains. The covered trucks presently in use on the private roadway parallelling the tracks is a great improvement.

Most of the early section workers were natives of Europe: Italians, Bohemians and Poles. In later years many were Mexican nationals. These workers preferred their native language and customs and after a few years returned to their homeland. Some came with their families but most left wives and children in Mexico going home only occasionally to visit them. It wasn't until the 1930's that fully integrated citizens were hired with no ethnic identification.

It was in 1901 that Wells and Hord built the elevator which is still in use on the north side of the railroad, to secure corn for their expanding feedlots and provide a market for the local farmers. The business eventually boasted the addition of a lumber yard as well as cribs for ear corn storage. The Union Pacific added a stockyards for handling livestock shipped both in and out and installed another crossing (now closed) east of the elevator near the section houses. The first manager of the elevator was Clay Shepherd, already an employee of the Hord and Shonsey cattle operation at Clarks. He was followed by his son-in-law, Arthur Frazier and a succession of others, including: Bob McLean, John Brown, Bryce Ackerman, Will Truesdell, Bill Bazor, Charles Beaman, H. P. Dittmer, Asa Smith and Marvin Wilcox. In 1957, Kuhn and Stern Grain Company bought the elevator from Hords and used it in connection with their business in Clarks. In 1969, they sold to the Sock Grain Company who in 1976 sold to the Clarks Grain Company owned by Ira Reisener. Rodney Scherer is the present operator.

It was the Hords who envisioned a thriving community at Havens and purchased the entire forty acre plot which is bisected diagonally by the railroad, the highway rights of way. Most of it is on the south side and was native prairie land. Mrs. Etta Shepherd recalls that as a young girl, she was one of her father's (G. E. Antrim) hay crew who put up the hay on this portion of the area in the years prior to 1908.

Hords platted the land on the south side for a town with 100 foot wide streets and planned for businesses on both sides of the north-south street. The remainder of the area was divided into residential lots, many of which were sold to individuals but no houses were ever built by any of them.

Gus Knoebel, an unmarried immigrant of Jewish ancestry, built the first store on the south side in 1914. It was on the west side of the main street. Hord, anticipating the development of a complete urban community, constructed a row of buildings on the east side of this street, two stores, a theater and a bank. At the south end of this block they built a cement block garage to serve farmers' needs for machinery repair. They also erected two houses on an east-west street. One of these was removed within a few years, the other was occupied until recently and has since been razed.

Cecil Layton, a young man with a business heritage — his father, Frank Layton, was a hardware dealer in Silver Creek — opened a general store in one of the new buildings with a full line of merchandise, groceries, hardware and work clothing. A produce station buying cream, eggs and poultry brought in by the farmers was also part of the business. Mr. Layton's family, which included his wife, Dina and young son, Francis, moved into the west house. Their son, George, was born there in 1919.

Business volume for both the stores and elevator was considerably increased just prior to World War I. Some Polk County farmers who lived south of the Platte River built a bridge across the river south of Havens. They were led by Fred Lind. It provided them access to the market outlet and shopping center.

A post office was established in the Layton Store. It was later closed during the depth of the depression in the 1930's.

For a time the Laytons also operated the theater and had Saturday night movies. Later there were free shows, sometimes shown outdoors with seating provided in the street, because there were too many people for the theater to hold them. The theater building was used in many different ways. Neighborhood dances, traveling road shows, and Friday night card parties were held there. Many people used the theater as a place to entertain a charivari crowd after they noisily escorted the newlyweds from their new home to the "city" for treats.

The Chamberlain family opened the bank in Havens with Walter, Jr. (June) as the total staff. He kept a German police dog with him behind the counter as protection from possible bank robbers who were numerous in those days.

James Gleason brought his wife, Edith, and their children, Betty and James, Jr. (Gee Gee) and Mrs. Gleason's mother, Mrs. Krantz, from Omaha to Havens in the mid 1920's. Their daughter, Edith Mary, was born in Havens. He operated the bank only to see it fail during the beginning of the depression in 1929. The family then bought the store which was owned by the Buss Brothers (Harold and George), who had succeeded the Laytons. Harold Buss and another brother, Leon, then went to Clarks to operate a grocery store. Other owners of this store were Chauncey Layton in the 1920's and the Chas. Shepherds and Russell Olsons in the late 1930's.

A fire destroyed Gus Knoebel's store in the mid 1920's. He rented the building on the north end of the east side and continued his business. Later he moved his merchandise to the former bank building. He retired in the 1930's and sold his business to Jim Wolfe, a Clarks store owner.

Mr. Wolfe retired approximately ten years later and sold to Eddie and Lucille Lukasiewicz. He then bought the empty theater

building. He remodeled the stage and made the basement into living quarters for himself and his wife, Belle. They continued to show movies on a part-time basis. During an early winter blizzard in November, 1948, Mr. Wolfe awakened in the night to smell smoke in their living quarters. Fire, which had apparently originated in the building on the north end, destroyed the entire block of businesses including the living quarters of the Lukasiewicz's and Wolfe's. Huge drifts blocked highway 30 just east of Clarks preventing the fire department from responding. Lukasiewiczs rebuilt their store and moved a house to the west side of the street. Mr. Wolfe went to the Veterans' Home in Grand Island to live. Lukasiewiczs left Havens after a short time and moved their house to Central City.

The garage at the south end of main street had a succession of operators including: Oderkirk, Bill Frahm, John Karges, Finecy and LeSuer, McGavek and Dittmer Brothers.

In 1936, Joe Monson bought the garage building and converted it into a dance hall and skating rink. His brother-in-law, Ray Darnall, was associated with him in this venture and operated a cafe built with living quarters adjoining the hall. After several years as a popular recreational night spot its use diminished. Gene Urkoski later purchased the buildings. The house moved in for the Darnall family remains as a residence.

Dittmer Brothers Garage moved into the building on the north end of the original business block. They later sold out to Jerome Hemmer who owned it until the 1948 fire.

In the 1920's Leland Crozier assisted the expansion of the town by establishing a filling station on the west edge of the village. He installed a dynamo and furnished the electricity for lighting in the evening hours only, until ten o'clock — later on Saturday nights. A blink of the lights meant all business had better be finished — for in five minutes the diesel-powered dynamo was shut down. Roy Winbolt succeeded Crozier in the mid 1930's. The extension of REA lines into the area in 1940 brought full-time electric power. Later, the Winbolt family left Havens. The house was occupied for a time in the 1950's by German immigrants, Helmut and Iris Adomeit, and their two children. Neither house nor station remains as evidence of a once thriving business.

When the village was platted a lot was set aside for a church but none was built. Worship services were held at various times in the theater building but no formally established religious body was ever organized. In the late teens and early 1920's Wilbur Smith, a student at Nebraska Central College at Central City (then operated by the Quakers), served as pastor to the people of Havens. The Smiths were a beloved couple and much appreciated during their years of service in pastoral leadership. Mr. Smith died shortly before he was to have been graduated from the college. His wife, Elvira, then left the area

to teach school in various parts of the state, returning periodically to visit friends. Later there were Sunday School sessions, at times independent of sponsorship and at other times served by missionaries of the American Sunday School Union.

Restaurants were operated at various times by different people, including a family named Jung, Mr. and Mrs. Elzie Bivens, the Reimers family and Joe and Jessie Larson.

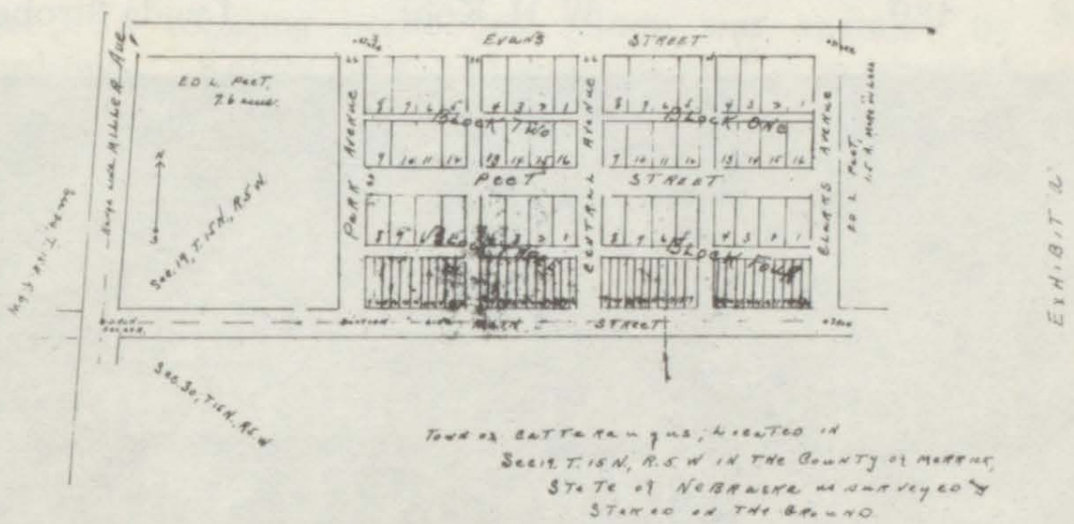
Medical services were provided for a time about 1930 by Dr. L. W. Elwood who had his office in the home of the Gleason family, but he soon returned to Silver Creek.

John Trainer, a local farmer, barbered for customers on Saturday nights in the 1930's.

Leslie Juhl built a garage and house on the west side of the street in the early 1950's. A short time later, when fire destroyed the house, they left the community.

All of the families who resided in Havens were engaged in business there until the H. P. Dittmers chose it for their retirement years. Their son and his wife, Fred and Venda Dittmer, are retired and live in a mobile home there.

In the late 1930's Havens appeared to fulfill its founder's dreams with its largest population of nearly forty residents. Like other tiny towns it fell victim to the perfection of automobiles and roads leading to the larger towns. For nearly half a century it provided a business and social center where neighbors gathered to share not only their triumphs but their woes. Many memories are cherished of friendships developed during the days of this community's active life.



CATTARAGUS

The area of land known as Cattaragus is located northwest of Clarks in Sec. 19-T-15N R5W in Merrick County. In October, 1886, its owner, Mr. Ed L. Peet, had the land surveyed and sectioned into a town. History records that in those early days of Merrick County

people generally believed the railroad would come through this property. Streets and avenues were plotted to be sixty-six feet wide and were then known as Main Street, Clarks Avenue, Evans Street, Park Avenue, Miller Avenue, Central Avenue, and Peet Street. Lots and blocks were plotted and sold to various families. Properties were bought and sold many times. The owner's visions of a thriving town were never fulfilled as the railroad located elsewhere. At the present time the "town" of Cattaragus is owned by Mr. and Mrs. James Helgoth. This couple and their children presently reside on Peet Street.

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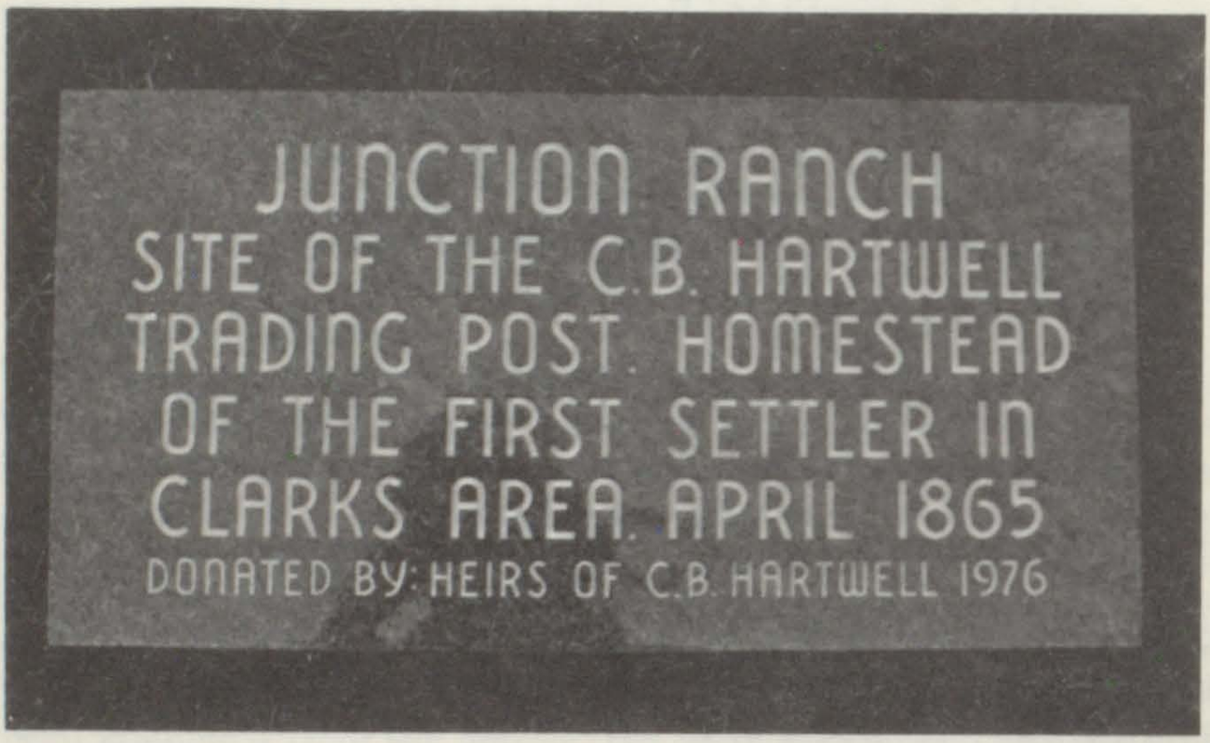
POPULATION SURVEY
CLARKS, NEBRASKA

YEAR	POPULATION	MAYOR	CLERK
1870	66		
1880	208		
1900	554		
1910	605		
1920	540		
1930	540	E. E. Davis	W. J. Fosbury
1948	454	Clyde Mustard	G. C. Bush
1952	464	Clyde Mustard	D. L. Kaminsky
1960	439	Leo Eschliman	L. H. Glasgow
1974	480	LeRoy Geier	Lynda Strobel
1976	480	W. H. Kohl	Lynda Strobel

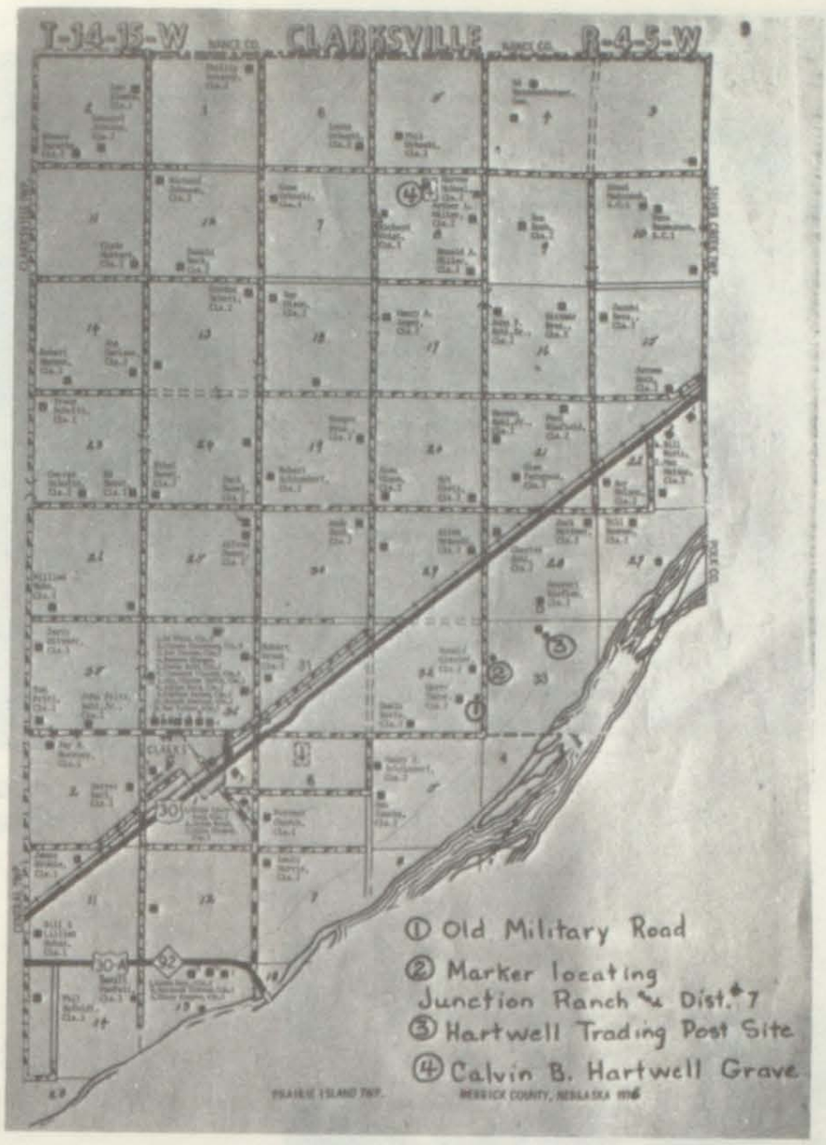


Chapter 11

Did You Know?

That when Mike Shonsey, Robert McLean, and Matt Kokjer were on the school board their interest and dedication in hiring the best teachers greatly enhanced the educational facilities of Clarks . . . in the early years Clarks School had a state-winning basketball team and the girl's team was runner-up . . . Brothers Elmer, George, Arthur, and Amos Gates and their father and uncle tore down the old school house . . . two Clarks boys enlisting in the Army during World War I were George Burger and Elmer Gates. They were not of age yet and parental permission had to be given . . . a livery stable was located where the Colby garage is now . . . the lumber yard was north of the railroad tracks across the street from the Cliff Lovelace house and was operated by Mr. Fenell . . . St. Peter's Catholic Church was once located where Don Randall lives . . . Granville Smith once operated his workshop where the Darwin Odle trailer home used to be . . . the house across from the Ed Hunscote property was once the Clarks opera house . . . the site where the present fire house stands was once used by W. J. Fosbury as his furniture store and undertaking establishment . . . Tom Keefe had a drug store where Gus Glasgow's Insurance Agency is now . . . Bob Lindahl's house was once a hotel . . . a rooming house and saloon was operated by George Beardsley . . . Kokjer Bros. had an implement shop where McGuinn's Garage is presently located . . . Francis and Will Gates owned the first steam merry-go-round in Merrick County . . . Will Gates had a variety store on the southwest part of downtown Clarks . . . there was once a bowling alley where Bender's store was located . . . the old depot was located across the tracks and west of the present one and also across the Union Pacific railroad tracks was an elevator owned and operated by Hord and Shonsey . . . the Peoples sisters had a rug shop in their house on the lot where Eva Lamb presently lives . . . William Gantz lived where Clifford Barnes lives now and he sold Ford autos. It was north of his place that the Merrick County Fair was held . . . a hotel where Pollard's filling station is "on the corner" was operated by Mr. Bill Douglas' great-grandmother who came from the coal-mining region of Hershey, Pennsylvania . . . Junction Ranch is located three miles east on highway 30 and then south one mile . . . in the 1880's the town jail was located in a store on Block 19 on Amity Street . . . in 1885 the valuation of property in the village limits was

given at $30,404.00 . . . starting for the Clarks basketball team in 1957 were top point man Asa L. Pollard, Ronnie Beck, Rick Strickland, Jim Graves, and Richard Fredrickson . . . Clarks only barber from 1925-1947 was Fred Gilliard . . . there was a hat shop in the house where McGuinns used to live . . . you could see the show at Havens for 5 and 10 cents . . . you could buy a used electric washing machine at J. H. Pollard and Sons, Co. for $20 in 1912 . . . in 1933 William Douglas Co. sold ten pound cloth bags of sugar for 58¢ . . . in 1959 at the Merrick County Fair, Marvin Williams of Clarks "stole the show" in the beef class with three purple ribbons, his sister Marlene took second place in showmanship . . . Mrs. Fern A. Beardsley, formerly a Clarks teacher, assistant postmaster, and co-editor of the Clarks newspaper, entered college at the age of 64 . . . in the early days of the legislature it is recorded that the town of Clarksville lacked one vote of becoming the state capital . . . Clarks telephone operators in the early switchboard days were known as the "Hello Girls" . . . Clarks High School graduate, Clinton Hurd, became captain of the Lincoln Police Force . . . at 105.5 miles on U.S. 30 is the junction with State 16 which crosses the Platte. Left on this gravel road to the Dexter farm is the site of the Great Pawnee Hunting and Burial Grounds and village. A second village site lies on the farm. One hundred years ago the course of the Platte River was a mile further south then it is now, and it was on this river bank that the two villages stood. Neither village has been excavated or explored to any great extent because they are both on tilled land. Along the edges of the ditches charred remains of house poles and posts are imbedded in the soil. The sites have been visited by many curio hunters who carried away arrowheads, hoes, axes, pipes, tomahawks, and flintlock muskets . . . to remove letters from flour sacks the pioneers used one tablespoon of lye to one gallon of water . . . the early settlers believed that headaches and rheumatism could be avoided by refusing meats and using more vegetables . . . sliced onions in a plate were once used as a sick room disinfectant . . . an early "cure" for ringworm was a poultice of butter and sulfur . . . practicing doctors in Clarks were Fox, Christy, and Martin . . . the post office was once located where the telephone company is now. Other locations in the past were at the site of the present meat locker and fire hall.



Clarks young people at a masquerade ball in the old Opera House, 1905. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

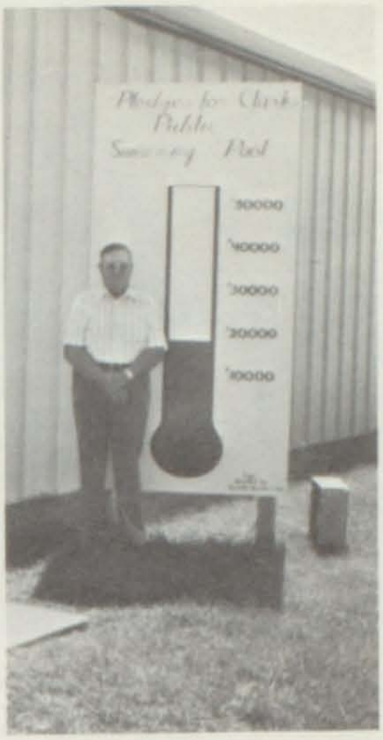
Fern and George Beardsley, Editors, Clarks Enterprise.

Kokjer Building in the early 1900's. Note entrance to Dr. Little's office at right. (Photo courtesy Thomas E. Kelly collection).

May, 1976, Bicentennial Flag raising ceremony.

Platte River Bridge, 1905

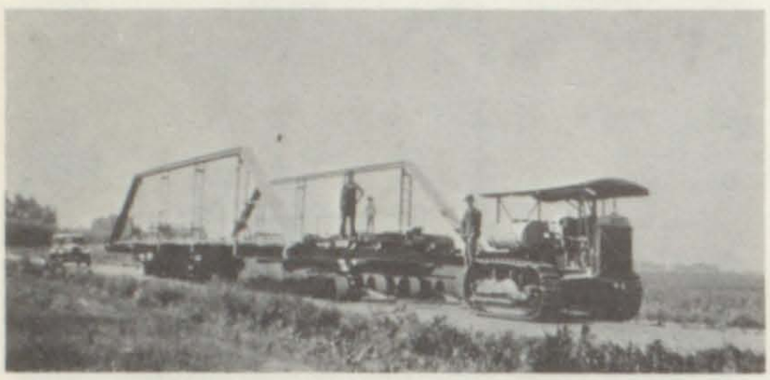
V.F.W. Honor Guard assembled for May, 1976, Memorial Day Service at Clarks village cemetery.



Mayor W. H. (Bill) Kohl

Clarks running team at the Fireman's Tournament held in York, Nebr., July, 1910.

First bridge over the Platte River, Clarks, Nebr.

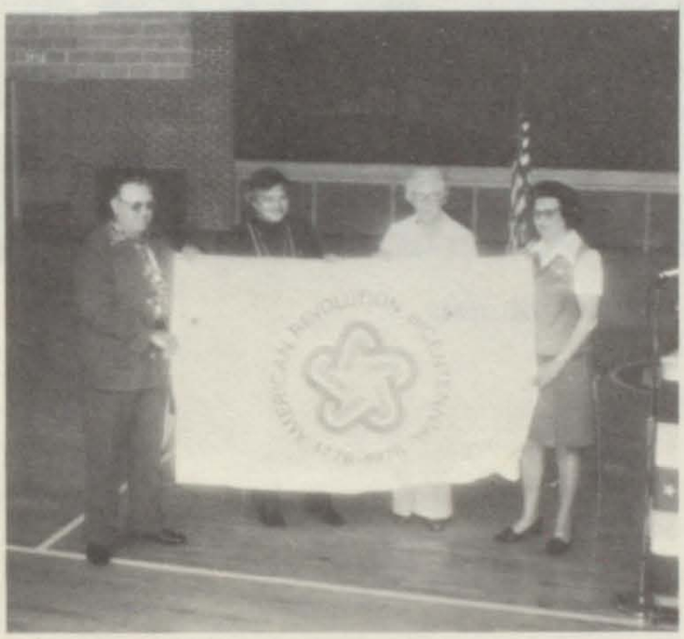


Moving the main channel of the Platte River steel bridge from Clarks to Silver Creek.

Clarks Baseball Team

Bicentennial Bonnet Contest entries, Clarks Park, May, 1976.

Ronald Glasser, at left, Chairman of the Clarks Bicentennial Historical Markers Project, views a granite form with Warren Wegner at the Wegner Monument Company, Central City, June, 1976.



April, 1976, presentation of the Bicentennial Flag to the Village of Clarks. At left is Mayor Kohl, Don Searcy, Verna Schlondorf, Chairperson of the Clarks Bicentennial Committee, and Marie Zoucha, Co-Chairperson.

Jim Wolfe's Store, Clarks, Nebr.

Early Clarks Motorists